THE HISTORY OF KING LEAR.

Acted at the

Duke's Theatre.

Reviv'd with Alterations.

By *N. TATE.*

LONDON,
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TO

My Esteemed FRIEND

Thomas Boteler, Esq;

SIR,

YOU *have a natural Right to this Piece, ſince, by your Advice, I attempted the Revival of it with Alterations. Nothing but the Power of your Perſwaſion, and my Zeal for all the Remains of* Shakeſpear, *cou'd have wrought me to ſo bold an Undertaking. I found that the New-modelling of this Story, wou'd force me ſometimes on the difficult Task of making the chiefeſt Perſons ſpeak ſomething like their Character, on Matter whereof I had no Ground in my Author.* Lear's *real, and* Ed-

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gar's *pretended Madneſs have ſo much of* extravagant Nature *(I know not how elſe to expreſs it) as cou'd never have ſtarted but from our* Shakeſpear's *Creating Fancy. The Images and Language are ſo odd and ſurprizing, and yet ſo agreeable and proper, that whilſt we grant that none but* Shakeſpear *cou'd have form'd ſuch Conceptions, yet we are ſatisfied that they were the only Things in the World that ought to be ſaid on thoſe Occaſions. I found the whole to anſwer your Account of it, a Heap of Jewels, unſtrung and unpoliſht; yet ſo dazling in their Diſorder, that I ſoon perceiv'd I had ſeiz'd a Treaſure. 'Twas my good Fortune to light on one Expedient to rectifie what was wanting in the Regularity and Probability of the Tale, which was to run through the whole A* Love *betwixt* Edgar *and* Cordelia, *that never chang'd word with each other in the Original. This renders* Cordelia's *Indifference and her Father's Paſſion in the firſt Scene probable. It likewiſe gives Countenance to* Edgar's *Diſguiſe, making that a generous Deſign that was before a poor Shift to ſave his Life. The Diſtreſs of the Story is evidently heightned by it; and it particularly gave Occaſion of a New Scene or Two, of more Succeſs (perhaps) than Merit. This Method neceſſarily threw me on making the Tale conclude in a*

Succeſs

Succeſs to the innocent diſtreſt Perſons: Otherwiſe I muſt have incumbred the Stage with dead Bodies, which Conduct makes many Tragedies conclude with unſeaſonable Jeſts. Yet was I Rackt with no ſmall Fears for ſo bold a Change, till I found it well receiv'd by my Audience; and if this will not ſatisfie the Reader, I can produce an Authority that queſtionleſs will. Neither is it of ſo Trivial an Undertaking to make a Tragedy end happily, for 'tis more difficult to Save than 'tis to Kill: The Dagger and Cup of Poyſon are alwaies in Readineſs; but to bring the Action to the laſt Extremity, and then by probable Means to recover All, will require the Art and Judgment of a Writer, and coſt him many a Pang in the Performance.

Mr. Dryd. *Pref. to the* Span. Fryar.

I have one thing more to Apologize for, which is, that I have us'd leſs Quaintneſs of Expreſſion even in the neweſt Parts of this Play. I confeſs 'twas Deſign in me, partly to comply with my Author's Style to make the Scenes of a Piece, and partly to give it ſome Reſemblance of the Time and Perſons here Repreſented. This, Sir, I ſubmit wholly to you, who are both a Judge and Maſter of Style. Nature had exempted you before you went Abroad from the Moroſe Saturnine Humour of our Country, and you brought home the Refi-

nedneſs

nedneſs of Travel without the Affectation. Many Faults I ſee in the following Pages, and queſtion not but you will diſcover more; yet I will preſume ſo far on your Friendſhip, as to make the Whole a Preſent to you, and Subſcribe my ſelf

Your obliged Friend

and humble Servant,

N. Tate.

PROLOGUE.

SInce by Miſtakes your beſt Delights are made,
(For ev'n your Wives can pleaſe in Maſquerade)
'Twere worth our While t' have drawn you in this day
By a new Name to our old honeſt Play;
But he that did this Evenings Treat prepare
Bluntly reſolv'd before-hand to declare
Your Entertainment ſhould be moſt old Fare.
Yet hopes, ſince in rich Shakeſpear's *ſoil it grew,*
'Twill reliſh yet with thoſe whoſe Taſts are True,
And his Ambition is to pleaſe a Few.
If then this Heap of Flow'rs ſhall chance to wear
Freſh Beauty in the Order they now bear,
Ev'n this Shakeſpear's *Praiſe; each Ruſtick knows*
'Mongſt plenteous Flow'rs a Garland to Compoſe,
Which ſtrung by his courſe Hand may fairer Show,
But 'twas a Pow'r: Divine firſt made 'em Grow.
Why ſhou'd theſe Scenes lie hid, in which we find
What may at Once divert and teach the Mind?
Morals were alwaies proper for the Stage,
But are ev'n neceſſary in this Age.
Poets muſt take the Churches Teaching Trade,
Since Prieſts their Province of Intrigue invade;
But We the worſt in this Exchange have got,
In vain our Poets Preach, whilſt Church-men Plot.

The Perſons.

King *Lear*,	Mr. *Betterton.*
Gloſter,	Mr. *Gillo.*
Kent,	Mr. *Wiltſhire.*
Edgar,	Mr. *Smith.*
Baſtard,	Mr. *Jo. Williams.*
Cornwall,	Mr. *Norris.*
Albany,	Mr. *Bowman.*
Gentleman-Uſher,	Mr. *Jevon.*

Gonerill,	Mrs. *Shadwell.*
Regan,	Lady *Slingsby.*
Cordelia,	Mrs. *Barry.*

Guards, Officers, Meſſengers, Attendants.

KING LEAR.

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

Enter Baſtard *ſolus.*

Baſt. THOU Nature art my Goddeſs, to thy Law
My Services are bound, why am I then
Depriv'd of a Son's Right becauſe I came not
In the dull Road that cuſtom has preſcrib'd?
Why Baſtard, wherefore Baſe, when I can boaſt
A Mind as gen'rous and a Shape as true
As honeſt Madam's Iſſue? why are we
Held Baſe, who in the luſty ſtealth of Nature
Take fiercer Qualities than what compound
The ſcanted Births of the ſtale Marriage-bed?
Well then, legitimate *Edgar*, to thy right
Of Law I will oppoſe a Baſtard's Cunning.
Our Father's Love is to the Baſtard *Edmund*
As to Legitimate *Edgar:* with ſucceſs
I've practis'd yet on both their eaſie Natures:
Here comes the old Man chaf't with th' Information
Which laſt I forg'd againſt my Brother *Edgar*,

A Tale ſo plauſible, ſo boldly utter'd
And heightned by ſuch lucky Accidents,
That now the ſlighteſt circumſtance confirms him,
And Baſe-born *Edmund* ſpight of Law inherits.

Enter Kent *and* Gloſter.

Gloſt. Nay, good my Lord, your Charity
O'reſhoots it ſelf to plead in his behalf;
You are your ſelf a Father, and may feel
The ſting of diſobedience from a Son
Firſt-born and beſt Belov'd: Oh Villain *Edgar!*
Kent. Be not too raſh, all may be forgery,
And time yet clear the Duty of your Son.
Gloſt. Plead with the Seas, and reaſon down the Winds,
Yet ſhalt thou ne're convince me, I have ſeen
His foul Deſigns through all a Father's fondneſs:
But be this Light and Thou my Witneſſes
That I diſcard him here from my Poſſeſſions,
Divorce him from my Heart, my Blood and Name.
Baſt. It works as I cou'd wiſh; I'll ſhew my ſelf.
Gloſt. Ha *Edmund!* welcome Boy; O *Kent* ſee here
Inverted Nature, *Gloſter*'s Shame and Glory,
This By-born, the wild ſally of my Youth,
Purſues me with all filial Offices,
Whilſt *Edgar*, begg'd of Heaven and born in Honour,
Draws plagues on my white head that urge me ſtill
To curſe in Age the pleaſure of my Youth.
Nay weep not, *Edmund*, for thy Brother's crimes;
O gen'rous Boy, thou ſhar'ſt but half his blood,
Yet lov'ſt beyond the kindneſs of a Brother.
But I'll reward thy Vertue. Follow me.
My Lord, you wait the King who comes reſolv'd
To quit the Toils of Empire, and divide
His Realms amongſt his Daughters, Heaven ſucceed it,
But much I fear the Change.
Kent. I grieve to ſee him
With ſuch wild ſtarts of paſſion hourly ſeiz'd,
As renders Majeſty beneath it ſelf.
Gloſt. Alas! 'tis the Infirmity of his Age,

Yet has his Temper ever been unfixt,
Chol'rick and ſuddain; hark, They approach.
[*Exeunt* Gloſter *and* Baſt.

Flouriſh. Enter Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Burgundy, Edgar, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, Edgar *ſpeaking to* Cordelia *at Entrance.*

Edgar. *Cordelia*, royal Fair, turn yet once more,
And e're ſucceſsfull *Burgundy* receive
The treaſure of thy Beauties from the King,
E're happy *Burgundy* for ever fold Thee,
Caſt back one pitying Look on wretched *Edgar.*
Cord. Alas what wou'd the wretched *Edgar* with
The more Unfortunate *Cordelia*;
Who in obedience to a Father's will
Flys from her *Edgar*'s Arms to *Burgundy*'s?
Lear. Attend my Lords of *Albany* and *Cornwall*
With Princely *Burgundy.*
Alb. We do, my Liege.
Lear. Give me the Mapp— know, Lords, We have divided
In Three our Kingdom, having now reſolved
To diſengage from Our long Toil of State,
Conferring All upon your younger years;
You, *Burgundy*, *Cornwall* and *Albany*
Long in Our Court have made your amorous ſojourn
And now are to be anſwer'd— tell me my Daughters
Which of you Loves Us moſt, that We may place
Our largeſt Bounty with the largeſt Merit.
Gonerill, Our Eldeſt-born, ſpeak firſt.
Gon. Sir, I do love You more than words can utter,
Beyond what can be valu'd, Rich or Rare,
Nor Liberty, nor Sight, Health, Fame, or Beauty
Are half ſo dear, my Life for you were vile,
As much as Child can love the beſt of Fathers.
Lear. Of all theſe Bounds, ev'n from this Line to this
With ſhady Foreſts and wide-skirted Meads,
We make Thee Lady, to thine and *Albany*'s Iſſue
Be this perpetual— What ſays Our Second Daughter?
Reg. My Siſter, Sir, in part expreſt my Love,

For ſuch as Hers, is mine, though more extended;
Senſe has no other Joy that I can reliſh,
I have my All in my dear Lieges Love!
Lear. Therefore to thee and thine Hereditary
Remain this ample Third of our fair Kingdom.
Cord. Now comes my Trial, how am I diſtreſt,
That muſt with cold ſpeech tempt the chol'rick King
Rather to leave me Dowerleſs, than condemn me
To loath'd Embraces!
Lear. Speak now Our laſt, not leaſt in Our dear Love,
So ends my Task of State,—— *Cordelia* ſpeak,
What canſt Thou ſay to win a richer Third
Than what thy Siſters gain'd?
Cord. Now muſt my Love in words fall ſhort of theirs
As much as it exceeds in Truth—Nothing my Lord.
Lear. Nothing can come of Nothing, ſpeak agen.
Cord. Unhappy am I that I can't diſſemble,
Sir, as I ought, I love your Majeſty,
No more nor leſs.
Lear. Take heed *Cordelia*,
Thy Fortunes are at ſtake, think better on't
And mend thy Speech a little.
Cord. O my Liege,
You gave me Being, Bred me, dearly Love me,
And I return my Duty as I ought,
Obey you, Love you, and moſt Honour you!
Why have my Siſters Husbands, if they love you All?
Happ'ly when I ſhall Wed, the Lord whoſe Hand
Shall take my Plight, will carry half my Love,
For I ſhall never marry, like my Siſters,
To Love my Father All.
Lear. And goes thy Heart with this?
'Tis ſaid that I am Chol'rick, judge me Gods,
Is there not cauſe? now Minion I perceive
The Truth of what has been ſuggeſted to Us,
Thy Fondneſs for the Rebel Son of *Gloſter*,
Falſe to his Father, as Thou art to my Hopes:
And oh take heed, raſh Girl, leſt We comply
With thy fond wiſhes, which thou wilt too late
Repent, for know Our nature cannot brook

A Child

A Child ſo young and ſo Ungentle.
Cord. So young my Lord and True.
Lear. Thy Truth then be thy Dow'r,
For by the ſacred Sun and ſolemn Night
I here diſclaim all my paternal Care,
And from this minute hold thee as a Stranger
Both to my Blood and Favour.
Kent. This is Frenzy.
Conſider, good my Liege——
Lear. Peace *Kent.*
Come not between a Dragon and his Rage.
I lov'd her moſt, and in her tender Truſt
Deſign'd to have beſtow'd my Age at Eaſe!
So be my Grave my Peace as here I give
My Heart from her, and with it all my Wealth:
My Lords of *Cornwall* and of *Albany*,
I do inveſt you jointly with full Right
In this fair Third, *Cordelia*'s forfeit Dow'r.
Mark me, My Lords, obſerve Our laſt Reſolve,
Our Self attended with an hundred Knights
Will make Aboad with you in monthly Courſe,
The Name alone of King remain with me,
Yours be the Execution and Revenues,
This is Our final Will, and to confirm it
This Coronet part between you.
Kent. Royal *Lear*,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my King,
Lov'd as my Father, as my Maſter follow'd,
And as my Patron thought on in my Pray'rs——
Lear. Away, the Bow is bent, make from the Shaft.
Kent. No, let it fall and drench within my Heart,
Be *Kent* unmannerly when *Lear* is mad:
Thy youngeſt Daughter——
Lear. On thy Life no more.
Kent. What wilt thou doe, old Man?
Lear. Out of my ſight!
Kent. See better firſt.
Lear. Now by the gods——
Kent. Now by the gods, raſh King, thou ſwear'ſt in vain.
Lear. Ha Traytour——

Kent. Do,

Kent. Do, kill thy Phyſician, *Lear*,
Strike through my Throat, yet with my lateſt Breath
I'll Thunder in thine Ear my juſt Complaint,
And tell Thee to thy Face that Thou doſt ill.
Lear. Hear me raſh Man, on thy Allegiance hear me;
Since thou haſt ſtriv'n to make Us break our Vow
And preſt between our Sentence and our Pow'r,
Which nor our Nature nor our Place can bear,
We baniſh thee for ever from our Sight
And Kingdom; if when Three days are expir'd
Thy hated Trunk be found in our Dominions
That moment is thy Death; Away.
Kent. Why fare thee well, King, ſince thou art reſolv'd,
I take thee at thy word, and will not ſtay
To ſee thy Fall: the gods protect the Maid
That truly thinks, and has moſt juſtly ſaid.
Thus to new Climates my old Truth I bear,
Friendſhip lives Hence, and Baniſhment is Here. [*Exit.*
Lear. Now *Burgundy*, you ſee her Price is faln,
Yet if the fondneſs of your Paſſion ſtill
Affects her as ſhe ſtands, Dow'rleſs, and loſt
In our Eſteem, ſhe's yours, take her or leave her.
Burg. Pardon me, Royal *Lear*, I but demand
The Dow'r your Self propos'd, and here I take
Cordelia by the Hand Dutcheſs of *Burgundy*.
Lear. Then leave her Sir, for by a Father's rage
I tell you all her Wealth. Away.
Burg. Then Sir be pleas'd to charge the breach
Of our Alliance on your own Will
Not my Inconſtancy.
[*Exeunt. Manent* Edgar *and* Cordelia.
Edg. Has Heaven then weigh'd the merit of my Love,
Or is't the raving of my ſickly Thought?
Cou'd *Burgundy* forgoe ſo rich a Prize
And leave her to deſpairing *Edgar*'s Arms?
Have I thy Hand *Cordelia*, do I claſp it,
The Hand that was this minute to have join'd
My hated Rivals? do I kneel before thee
And offer at thy feet my panting Heart?
Smile, Princeſs, and convince me, for as yet

I doubt,

I doubt, and dare not truſt the dazling Joy.
Cord. Some Comfort yet that 'twas no vicious Blot
That has depriv'd me of a Father's Grace,
But meerly want of that that makes me rich
In wanting it, a ſmooth profeſſing Tongue:
O Siſters, I am loth to call your fault
As it deſerves; but uſe our Father well,
And wrong'd *Cordelia* never ſhall repine.
Edg. O heav'nly Maid that art thy ſelf thy Dow'r,
Richer in Vertue than the Stars in Light,
If *Edgar*'s humble fortunes may be grac't
With thy Acceptance, at thy feet he lays 'em.
Ha my *Cordelia!* doſt thou turn away?
What have I done t'offend Thee?
Cord. Talk't of Love.
Edg. Then I've offended oft, *Cordelia* too
Has oft permitted me ſo to offend.
Cord. When, *Edgar*, I permitted your Addreſſes,
I was the darling Daughter of a King,
Nor can I now forget my royal Birth,
And live dependent on my Lover's Fortune.
I cannot to ſo low a fate ſubmit,
And therefore ſtudy to forget your Paſſion,
And trouble me upon this Theam no more.
Edg. Thus Majeſty takes moſt State in Diſtreſs!
How are we toſt on Fortune's fickle flood!
The Wave that with ſurpriſing kindneſs brought
The dear Wreck to my Arms, has ſnatcht it back,
And left me mourning on the barren Shore.
Cord. This Baſeneſs of th' ignoble *Burgundy* [*Aſide.*
Draws juſt ſuſpicion on the Race of Men,
His Love was Int'reſt, ſo may *Edgar*'s be
And He but with more Complement diſſemble;
If ſo, I ſhall oblige him by Denying:
But if his Love be fixt, ſuch Conſtant flame
As warms our Breaſts, if ſuch I find his Paſſion,
My Heart as gratefull to his Truth ſhall be,
And Cold *Cordelia* prove as Kind as He. [*Exit.*

Enter Baſtard *haſtily.*

Baſt. Brother, I've found you in a lucky minute,

Fly

Fly and be ſafe, ſome Villain has incens'd
Our Father againſt your Life.
Edg. Diſtreſt *Cordelia!* but oh! more Cruel!
Baſt. Hear me Sir, your Life, your Life's in Danger.
Edg. A Reſolve ſo ſudden
And of ſuch black Importance!
Baſt. 'Twas not ſudden,
Some Villain has of long time laid the Train.
Edg. And yet perhaps 'twas but pretended Coldneſs,
To try how far my paſſion would purſue.
Baſt. He hears me not; wake, wake Sir.
Edg. Say ye Brother?—
No Tears good *Edmund*, if thou bringſt me tidings
To ſtrike me dead, for Charity delay not,
That preſent will befit ſo kind a Hand.
Baſt. Your danger Sir comes on ſo faſt
That I want time t'inform you, but retire
Whilſt I take care to turn the preſſing Stream.
O gods! for Heav'ns ſake Sir.
Edg. Pardon me Sir, a ſerious Thought
Had ſeiz'd me, but I think you talkt of danger
And wiſht me to Retire; muſt all our Vows
End thus!— Friend I obey you— O *Cordelia!* [*Exit.*
Baſt. Ha! ha! fond Man, ſuch credulous Honeſty
Leſſens the Glory of my Artifice,
His Nature is ſo far from doing wrongs
That he ſuſpects none: if this Letter ſpeed
And paſs for *Edgar*'s, as himſelf wou'd own
The Counterfeit but for the foul Contents,
Then my deſigns are perfect— here comes *Gloſter.*
[*Enter* Gloſter.
Gloſt. Stay *Edmund*, turn, what paper were you reading?
Baſt. A Trifle Sir.
Gloſt. What needed then that terrible diſpatch of it
Into your Pocket, come produce it Sir.
Baſt. A Letter from my Brother Sir, I had
Juſt broke the Seal but knew not the Contents,
Yet fearing they might prove to blame
Endeavour'd to conceal it from your ſight.
Gloſt. 'Tis *Edgar*'s Character. [*Reads.*

This

This Policy of Fathers is intollerable that keeps our Fortunes from us till Age will not ſuffer us to enjoy 'em; I am weary of the Tyranny: Come to me that of this I may ſpeak more: if our Father would ſleep till I wak't him, you ſhou'd enjoy half his Poſſeſſions, and live beloved of your Brother

Edgar.

Slept till I wake him, you ſhou'd enjoy
Half his poſſeſſions— *Edgar* to write this
'Gainſt his indulgent Father! Death and Hell!
Fly, *Edmund*, ſeek him out, wind me into him
That I may bite the Traytor's heart, and fold
His bleeding Entrals on my vengefull Arm.
Baſt. Perhaps 'twas writ, my Lord, to prove my Vertue.
Gloſt. Theſe late Eclipſes of the Sun and Moon
Can bode no leſs; Love cools, and friendſhip fails,
In Cities mutiny, in Countrys diſcord,
The bond of Nature crack't 'twixt Son and Father:
Find out the Villain, do it carefully
And it ſhall loſe thee nothing. [*Exit.*
Baſt. So, now my project's firm, but to make ſure
I'll throw in one proof more and that a bold one;
I'll place old *Gloſter* where he ſhall o're-hear us
Confer of this deſign, whilſt to his thinking,
Deluded *Edgar* ſhall accuſe himſelf.
Be Honeſty my Int'reſt and I can
Be honeſt too, and what Saint ſo Divine
That will ſucceſsfull Villany decline! [*Exit.*

Enter Kent *diſguis'd.*

Kent. Now baniſht *Kent*, if thou canſt pay thy duty
In this diſguiſe where thou doſt ſtand condemn'd,
Thy Maſter *Lear* ſhall find thee full of Labours.

Enter Lear *attended.*

Lear. In there, and tell our Daughter we are here
Now; What art Thou?
Kent. A Man, Sir.

Lear. What doſt thou profeſs, or wou'dſt with us?

Kent. I do profeſs to be no leſs then I ſeem, to ſerve him truly that puts me in Truſt, to love him that's Honeſt, to converſe with him that's wiſe and ſpeaks little, to fight when I can't chooſe; and to eat no Fiſh.

Lear. I ſay, what art Thou?

Kent. A very honeſt-hearted fellow, and as poor as the King.

Lear. Then art thou poor indeed—— What can'ſt thou do?

Kent. I can keep honeſt Counſel, marr a curious Tale in the telling, deliver a plain Meſſage bluntly, that which ordinary Men are fit for I am qualify'd in, and the beſt of me is Diligence.

Lear. Follow me, thou ſhalt ſerve me.

Enter one of Gonerill's *Gentlemen.*

Now Sir?

Gent. Sir———— [*Exit*; Kent *runs after him.*

Lear. What ſays the fellow? Call the Clatpole back.

Att. My Lord, I know not, but methinks your Highneſs is entertain'd with ſlender Ceremony.

Servant. He ſays, my Lord, your Daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the Slave back when I call'd him?

Serv. My Lord, he anſwer'd me i'th' ſurlieſt manner,
That he wou'd not.

Re-enter Gentleman *brought in by* Kent.

Lear. I hope our Daughter did not ſo inſtruct him:
Now, who am I Sir?

Gent. My Ladies Father.

Lear. My Lord's Knave—— [*Strikes him.*

[Gonerill *at the Entrance.*

Gent. I'll not be ſtruck my Lord.

Kent. Nor tript neither, thou vile Civet-box.

[*Strikes up his heels.*

Gon. By Day and Night this is inſufferable,
I will not bear it.

Lear. Now, Daughter, why that frontlet on?
Speak, do's that Frown become our Preſence?

Gan. Sir,

Gon. Sir, this licentious Inſolence of your Servants
Is moſt unſeemly, hourly they break out
In quarrels bred by their unbounded Riots,
I had fair hope by making this known to you
T'have had a quick Redreſs, but find too late
That you protect and countenance their out-rage;
And therefore, Sir, I take this freedom, which
Neceſſity makes Diſcreet.

Lear. Are you our Daughter?

Gon. Come, Sir, let me entreat you to make uſe
Of your diſcretion, and put off betimes
This Diſpoſition that of late transforms you
From what you rightly are.

Lear. Do's any here know me? why this is not *Lear*.
Do's *Lear* walk thus? ſpeak thus? where are his Eyes?
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

Gon. Come, Sir, this Admiration's much o'th' ſavour
Of other your new humours, I beſeech you
To undeſtand my purpoſes aright;
As you are old, you ſhou'd be ſtaid and wiſe,
Here do you keep an hundred Knights and Squires,
Men ſo debaucht and bold that this our Palace
Shews like a riotous Inn, a Tavern, Brothel;
Be then adviſed by her that elſe will take
The ſhe beggs, to leſſen your Attendance,
Take half a way, and ſee that the remainder
Be ſuch as may befit your Age, and know
Themſelves and you.

Lear. Darkneſs and Devils!
Saddle my Horſes, call my Train together,
Degenerate Viper, I'll not ſtay with Thee;
I yet have left a Daughter—Serpent, Monſter,
Leſſen my Train, and call 'em riotous?
All men approv'd of choice and rareſt Parts,
That each particular of duty know—
How ſmall, *Cordelia*, was thy Fault? O *Lear*,
Beat at this Gate that let thy Folly in,
And thy dear Judgment out; Go, go, my People.
[*Going off meets* Albany entring.
Ingratefull Duke, was this your will?

Alb. What Sir?
Lear. Death! fifty of my Followers at a clap!
Alb. The matter Madam?
Gon. Never afflict your ſelf to know the Cauſe,
But give his Dotage way.
Lear. Blaſts upon thee,
Th' untented woundings of a Father's Curſe
Pierce ev'ry Senſe about Thee; old fond Eyes
Lament this Cauſe again, I'll pluck ye out
And caſt ye with the Waters that ye loſe
To temper Clay— No, *Gorgon*, thou ſhalt find
That I'll reſume the Shape which thou doſt think
I have caſt off for ever.
Gon. Mark ye that.
Lear. Hear Nature!
Dear Goddeſs hear, and if thou doſt intend
To make that Creature fruitfull, change thy purpoſe;
Pronounce upon her Womb the barren Curſe,
That from her blaſted Body never ſpring
A Babe to honour her— but if ſhe muſt bring forth,
Defeat her Joy with ſome diſtorted Birth,
Or monſtrous Form, the Prodigy o'th' Time,
And ſo perverſe of ſpirit, that it may Live
Her Torment as 'twas Born, to fret her Cheeks
With conſtant Tears, and wrinkle her young Brow.
Turn all her Mother's Pains to Shame and Scorn,
That ſhe may curſe her Crime too late, and feel
How ſharper than a Serpent's Tooth it is
To have a Thankleſs Child! Away, away. [*Exit cum ſuis.*
Gon. Preſuming thus upon his numerous Train
He thinks to play the Tyrant here, and hold
Our Lives at will.
Alb. Well, you may bear too far. [*Ex.*

End of the Firſt Act.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE, *Gloſter's* Houſe.

Enter Baſtard.

Baſt. THE Duke comes here to night, I'll take advantage
Of his Arrival to compleat my project,
Brother a Word, come forth, 'tis I your Friend, [*Enter* Edgar.
My Father watches for you, fly this place,
Intelligence is giv'n where you are hid,
Take the advantage of the Night, bethink ye
Have not ſpoke againſt the Duke of *Cornwall*
Something might ſhew you a favourer of
Duke *Albany's* Party?
Edg. Nothing, why ask you?
Baſt. Becauſe he's coming here to Night in haſte
And *Regan* with him—heark! the Guards, Away.
Ed. Let 'em come on, I'll ſtay and clear my ſelf.
Baſt. Your Innocence at leiſure may be heard,
But *Gloſter's* ſtorming Rage as yet is deaf,
And you may periſh e're allow'd the hearing. [*Ex.* Edgar.
Gloſter comes yonder: now to my feign'd ſcuffle—
Yield, come before my Father! Lights here, Lights!
Some Blood drawn on me wou'd beget opinion [*Stabs his Arm.*
Of our more fierce Encounter—I have ſeen
Drunkards do more than this in ſport. {*Enter* Gloſter
Gloſt. Now, *Edmund*, where's the Traytour? {*and Servants.*
Baſt. That Name, Sir,
Strikes Horrour through me, but my Brother, Sir,
Stood here i'th' Dark.
Gloſt. Thou bleed'ſt, purſue the Villain
And bring him piece-meal to me.
Baſt. Sir, he's fled.
Gloſt. Let him fly far, this Kingdom ſhall not hide him:

The

The noble Duke, my Patron, comes to Night,
By his Authority I will proclaim
Rewards for him that brings him to the Stake,
And Death for the Concealer.
Then of my Lands, loyal and natural Boy,
I'll work the means to make thee capable. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Kent *(diſguis'd ſtill) and* Goneril's *Gentleman, ſeverally.*

Gent. Good morrow Friend, belong'ſt thou to this Houſe?
Kent. Ask them will anſwer thee.
Gent. Where may we ſet our Horſes?
Kent. I'th' Mire.
Gent. I am in haſte, prethee an' thou lov'ſt me, tell me.
Kent. I love thee not.
Gent. Why then I care not for Thee.
Kent. An' I had thee in *Lipsbury* Pinfold, I'd make thee care for me.
Gent. What doſt thou mean? I know thee not.
Kent. But, Minion, I know Thee.
Gent. What doſt thou know me for?
Kent. For a baſe, proud, beggarly, white-liver'd, Glaſs-gazing, ſuperſerviceable finical Rogue; one that wou'd be a Pimp in way of good Service, and art nothing but a compoſition of Knave, Beggar, Coward, Pandar——.
Gent. What a monſtrous Fellow art thou to rail at one that is neither known of thee nor knows thee?
Kent. Impudent Slave, not know me, who but two days ſince tript up thy heels before the King: draw, Miſcreant, or I'll make the Moon ſhine through thee.
Gent. What means the Fellow?——Why prethee, prethee; I tell thee I have nothing to do with thee.
Kent. I know your Rogueſhip's Office, you come with Letters againſt the King, taking my young Lady *Vanity*'s part againſt her royal Father; draw Raſcal.
Gent. Murther, murther, help Ho!
Kent. Doſt thou ſcream Peacock, ſtrike Puppet, ſtand dappar Slave.
Gent. Help Hea'! Murther, help. [*Exit.* Kent *after him.*

Flouriſh.

Flouriſh. Enter Duke of Cornwal, Regan, *attended*, Gloſter, Baſtard.

Gloſt. All Welcome to your Graces, you do me honour.
Duke. Gloſter w'ave heard with ſorrow that your Life
Has been attempted by your impious Son,
But *Edmund* here has paid you ſtricteſt Duty.
Gloſt. He did betray his Practice, and receiv'd
The Hurt you ſee, ſtriving to apprehend him.
Duke. Is He purſu'd?
Gloſt. He is, my Lord.
Reg. Uſe our Authority to apprehend
The Traytour and do Juſtice on his Head;
For you, *Edmund*, that have ſo ſignaliz'd
Your Vertue, you from henceforth ſhall be ours;
Natures of ſuch firm Truſt we much ſhall need.
A charming Youth and worth my further Thought. [*Aſide.*
Duke. Lay comforts, noble *Gloſter*, to your Breaſt,
As we to ours; This Night be ſpent in Revels,
We chooſe you, *Gloſter*, for our Hoſt to Night,
A troubleſome expreſſion of our Love.
On, to the Sports before us—who are Theſe?

Enter the Gentleman purſu'd by Kent.

Gloſt. Now, what's the matter?
Duke. Keep peace upon your Lives, he dies that ſtrikes.
Whence and what are ye?
Att. Sir, they are Meſſengers, the one from your Siſter,
The other from the King.
Duke. Your Difference? ſpeak.
Gent. I'm ſcarce in breath, my Lord.
Kent. No marvel, you have ſo beſtirr'd your Valour.
Nature diſclaims the Daſtard, a Taylor made him.
Duke. Speak yet, how grew your Quarrel?
Gent. Sir this old Ruffian here, whoſe Life I ſpar'd
In pity to his Beard——
Kent. Thou Eſſence Bottle!
In pity to my Beard? — Your leave, my Lord,

And

And I will tread the Muſs-cat into Mortar.
Duke. Know'ſt thou our Preſence?
Kent. Yes, Sir, but Anger has a Privilege.
Duke. Why art thou angry?
Kent. That ſuch a Slave as this ſhou'd wear a Sword
And have no Courage, Office and no Honeſty.
Not Froſt and Fire hold more Antipathy
Than I and ſuch a Knave.
Gloſt. Why doſt thou call him Knave?
Kent. His Countenance likes me not.
Duke. No more perhaps does Mine, nor His or Hers.
Kent. Plain-dealing is my Trade, and to be plain, Sir,
I have ſeen better Faces in my time
Than ſtands on any Shoulders now before me.
Reg. This is ſome Fellow that having once been prais'd,
For Bluntneſs, ſince affects a ſawcy Rudeneſs,
But I have known one of theſe ſurly Knaves
That in his Plainneſs harbour'd more Deſign
Than twenty cringing complementing Minions.
Duke. What's the offence you gave him?
Gent. Never any, Sir.
It pleas'd the King his Maſter lately
To ſtrike me on a ſlender miſconſtruction,
Whilſt watching his Advantage this old Lurcher
Tript me behind, for which the King extold him;
And, fluſht with th' honour of this bold exploit,
Drew on me here agen.
Duke. Bring forth the Stocks, we'll teach you.
Kent. Sir I'm too old to learn;
Call not the Stocks for me, I ſerve the King,
On whoſe Employment I was ſent to you,
You'll ſhew too ſmall Reſpect, and too bold Malice
Againſt the Perſon of my royal Maſter,
Stocking his Meſſenger.
Duke. Bring forth the Stocks, as I have Life and Honour,
There ſhall he ſit till Noon.
Reg. Till Noon, my Lord? till Night, and all Night too.
Kent. Why, Madam, if I were your Father's Dog
You wou'd not uſe me ſo.
Reg. Sir, being his Knave I will.

Gloſt. Let

Gloſt. Let me beſeech your Graces to forbear him,
His fault is much, and the good King his Maſter
Will check him for't, but needs muſt take it ill
To be thus ſlighted in his Meſſenger.
Duke. Wee'l anſwer that;
Our Siſter may receive it worſe to have
Her Gentleman aſſaulted: to our buſineſs lead. [*Exit.*
Gloſt. I am ſorry for thee, Friend, 'tis the Duke's pleaſure
Whoſe Diſpoſition will not be controll'd,
But I'll entreat for thee.
Kent. Pray do not, Sir——
I have watcht and travell'd hard,
Some time I ſhall ſleep out, the reſt I'll whiſtle:
Fare-well t'ye, Sir. [*Ex. Gloſt.*
All weary and o're-watcht,
I feel the drowzy Gueſt ſteal on me; take
Advantage heavy Eyes of this kind Slumber,
Not to behold this vile and ſhamefull Lodging. [*Sleeps.*

Enter Edgar.

Edg. I heard my ſelf proclaim'd,
And by the friendly Hollow of a Tree
Eſcapt the Hunt, no Port is free, no place
Where Guards and moſt unuſual Vigilance
Do not attend to take me——how eaſie now
'Twere to defeat the malice of my Trale,
And leave my Griefs on my Sword's reeking point;
But Love detains me from Death's peacefull Cell,
Still whiſpering me *Cordelia*'s in diſtreſs;
Unkinde as ſhe is I cannot ſee her wretched,
But muſt be neer to wait upon her Fortune.
Who knows but the white minute yet may come
When *Edgar* may do ſervice to *Cordelia*,
That charming Hope ſtill ties me to the Oar
Of painfull Life, and makes me too, ſubmit
To th' humbleſt ſhifts to keep that Life a foot;
My Face I will beſmear and knit my Locks,
The Country gives me proof and preſident
Of Bedlam Beggars, who with roaring Voices

Strike in their numm'd and mortify'd bare Arms
Pins, Iron-ſpikes, Thorns, ſprigs of Roſemary,
And thus from Sheep-coats Villages and Mills,
Sometimes with Prayers, ſometimes with Lunatick Banns
Enforce their Charity, poor *Tyrligod*, poor *Tom*
That's ſomething yet, *Edgar* I am no more. [*Exit*

Kent *in the Stocks ſtill*; *Enter* Lear *attended.*

Lear. 'Tis ſtrange that they ſhou'd ſo depart from home
And not ſend back our Meſſenger.
Kent. Hail, noble Maſter.
Lear. How? mak'ſt thou this Shame thy Paſtime?
What's he that has ſo much miſtook thy Place
To ſet thee here?
Kent. It is both He and She, Sir, your Son and Daughter.
Lear. No. *Kent:* Yes: *Lear*: No I ſay. *Kent*: I ſay yea:
Lear. By *Jupiter* I ſwear no.
Kent. By *Juno* I ſwear, I ſwear I.
Lear. They durſt not do't
They cou'd not, wou'd not do't, 'tis worſe then Murder
To doe upon Reſpect ſuch violent out-rage.
Reſolve me with all modeſt haſte which way
Thou mayſt deſerve, or they impoſe this uſage?
Kent. My Lord, when at their Home
I did commend your Highneſs Letters to them,
E'er I was Ris'n, arriv'd another Poſt
Steer'd in his haſte, breathleſs and panting forth
From *Gonerill* his Miſtreſs Salutations,
Whoſe Meſſage being deliver'd, they took Horſe,
Commanding me to follow and attend
The leiſure of their Anſwer; which I did,
But meeting that other Meſſenger
Whoſe welcome I perceiv'd had poiſon'd mine,
Being the very Fellow that of late
Had ſhew'n ſuch rudeneſs to your Highneſs, I
Having more Man than Wit about me, Drew,
On which he rais'd the Houſe with Coward cries:
This was the Treſpaſs which your Son and Daughter
Thought worth the ſhame you ſee it ſuffer here.

Lear.

Lear. Oh! how this Spleen ſwells upward to my Heart
And heaves for paſſage—— down thou climing Rage
Thy Element's below; where is this Daughter?
Kent. Within, Sir, at a Maſque.

Enter Gloſter.

Lear. Now *Gloſter?*—— ha!
Deny to ſpeak with me? th'are ſick, th'are weary,
They have travell'd hard to Night—— meer ſetches;
Bring me a better Anſwer.
Gloſt. My dear Lord,
You know the fiery Quality of the Duke——
Lear. Vengeance! Death, Plague, Confuſion,
Fiery? what Quality— why *Gloſter, Gloſter,*
I'd ſpeak with the Duke of *Cornwal* and his Wife.
Gloſt. I have inform'd 'em ſo.
Lear. Inform'd 'em! doſt thou underſtand me, Man,
I tell thee *Gloſter*——
Gloſt. I, my good Lord.
Lear. The King wou'd ſpeak with *Cornwal,* the dear Father
Wou'd with his Daughter ſpeak, commands her Service.
Are they inform'd of this? my Breath and Blood!
Fiery! the fiery Duke! tell the hot Duke——
No, but not yet, may be he is not well:
Infirmity do's ſtill neglect all Office;
I beg his Pardon, and I'll chide my Raſhneſs
That took the indiſpos'd and ſickly Fit
For the ſound Man— but wherefore ſits he there?
Death on my State, this Act convinces me
That this Retiredneſs of the Duke and her
Is plain Contempt; give me my Servant forth,
Go tell the Duke and's Wife I'd ſpeak with 'em.
Now, inſtantly, bid 'em come forth and hear me,
Or at their Chamber door I'll beat the Drum
Till it cry ſleep to Death——

Enter Cornwall *and* Regan.

Oh! are ye come?

Duke. Health to the King.

Reg. I am glad to ſee your Highneſs.

Lear. *Regan*, I think you are, I know what cauſe
I have to think ſo; ſhoud'ſt thou not be glad
I wou'd divorce me from thy Mother's Tomb?
Beloved *Regan*, thou wilt ſhake to hear
What I ſhall utter: Thou coud'ſt ne'r ha' thought it,
Thy Siſter's naught, O *Regan*, ſhe has ty'd
Ingratitude like a keen Vulture here, } Kent *here ſet at liberty.*
I ſcarce can ſpeak to thee.

Reg. I pray you, Sir, take patience; I have hope
That you know leſs to value her Deſert,
Then ſhe to ſlack her Duty.

Lear. Ha! how's that?

Reg. I cannot think my Siſter in the leaſt
Would fail in her reſpects, but if perchance
She has reſtrain'd the Riots of your Followers
'Tis on ſuch Grounds, and to ſuch wholſome Ends
As clears her from all Blame.

Lear. My Curſes on her.

Reg. O Sir, you are old
And ſhou'd content you to be rul'd and led
By ſome diſcretion that diſcerns your State
Better than you your ſelf, therefore, Sir,
Return to our Siſter, and ſay you have wrong'd her.

Lear. Ha! ask her Forgiveneſs?
No, no, 'twas my miſtake thou didſt not mean ſo,
Dear Daughter, I confeſs that I am old;
Age is unneceſſary, but thou art good,
And wilt diſpenſe with my Infirmity.

Reg. Good Sir, no more of theſe unſightly paſſions,
Return back to our Siſter.

Lear. Never, *Regan*,
She has abated me of half of my Train,
Lookt black upon me, ſtabb'd me with her Tongue;
All the ſtor'd Vengeances of Heav'n fall
On her Ingratefull Head; ſtrike her young Bones
Ye taking Ayrs with Lameneſs.

Reg. O the bleſt Gods! Thus will you wiſh on me
When the raſh mood——

Lear.

Lear. No, *Regan*, Thou ſhalt never have my Curſe,
Thy tender Nature cannot give thee o're
To ſuch Impiety; Thou better know'ſt
The Offices of Nature, bond of Child-hood,
And dues of Gratitude: Thou bear'ſt in mind
The half o'th' Kingdom which our love conferr'd
On thee and thine.

Reg. Good Sir, toth' purpoſe.

Lear. Who put my Man i'th' Stocks?

Duke. What Trumpet's that?

Reg. I know't, my Siſter's, this confirms her Letters.
Sir, is your Lady come?

Enter Gonerill's *Gentleman.*

Lear. More Torture ſtill?
This is a Slave whoſe eaſie borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle Grace of her he follows;
A Faſhion-fop that ſpends the day in Dreſſing,
And all to bear his Ladie's flatt'ring Meſſage,
That can deliver with a Grace her Lie,
And with as bold a face bring back a greater.
Out Varlet from my ſight.

Duke. What means your Grace?

Lear. Who ſtockt my Servant? *Regan*, I have hope
Thou didſt not know it.

Enter Gonerill.

Who comes here! oh Heavens!
If you do love Old men, if your ſweet ſway
Allow Obedience; if your ſelves are Old,
Make it your Cauſe, ſend down and take my part;
Why, *Gorgon*, doſt thou come to haunt me here?
Art not aſham'd to look upon this Beard?
Darkneſs upon my Eyes they play me falſe,
O *Regan*, wilt thou take her by the Hand?

Gon. Why not by th' Hand, Sir, how have I offended?
All's not Offence that indiſcretion finds,
And Dotage terms ſo.

Lear.

Lear. Heart thou art too tough.
Reg. I pray you, Sir, being old confeſs you are ſo,
If till the expiration of your Month
You will return and ſojourn with your Siſter,
Diſmiſſing half your Train, come then to me,
I am now from Home, and out of that Proviſion
That ſhall be needfull for your Entertainment.
Lear. Return with her and fifty Knights diſmiſt ?
No, rather I'll forſwear all Roofs, and chuſe
To be Companion to the Midnight Wolf,
My naked Head expos'd to th' mercileſs Air
Then have my ſmalleſt wants ſuppli'd by her.
Gon. At your choice, Sir.
Lear. Now I prithee Daughter do not make me mad;
I will not trouble thee, my Child, farewell,
Wee'l meet no more, no more ſee one another;
Let ſhame come when it will, I do not call it,
I do not bid the Thunder-bearer ſtrike,
Nor tell Tales of thee to avenging Heav'n;
Mend when thou canſt, be better at thy leiſure,
I can be patient, I can ſtay with *Regan*,
I, and my hundred Knights.
Reg. Your Pardon, Sir.
I lookt not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome.
Lear. Is this well ſpoken now ?
Reg. My Siſter treats you fair; what fifty Followers
Is it not well ? what ſhou'd you need of more ?
Gon. Why might not you, my Lord, receive Attendance
From thoſe whom ſhe calls Servants, or from mine?
Reg. Why not, my Lord ? if then they chance to ſlack you
We cou'd controll 'em—— if you come to me,
For now I ſee the Danger, I entreat you
To bring but Five and Twenty; to no more
Will I give place.
Lear. Hold now my Temper, ſtand this bolt unmov'd
And I am Thunder-proof;
The wicked when compar'd with the more wicked
Seem beautifull, and not to be the worſt,
Stands in ſome rank of Praiſe; now, *Gonerill*,

Thou

Thou art innocent agen, I'll go with thee;
Thy Fifty yet, do's double Five and Twenty,
And thou art twice her Love.
Gon. Hear me, my Lord,
What need you Five and Twenty, Ten, or Five,
To follow in a Houſe where twice ſo many
Have a Command t'attend you?
Reg. What need one?
Lear. Blood, Fire! hear—— Leaproſies and blueſt Plague
Room, room for Hell to belch her Horrors up
And drench the *Circes* in a ſtream of Fire;
Heark how th' Infernals eccho to my Rage
Their Whips and Snakes———
Reg. How lewd a thing is Paſſion!
Gon. So old and ſtomachfull. [*Lightning and Thunder.*
Lear. Heav'ns drop your Patience down;
You ſee me here, ye Gods, a poor old Man
As full of Griefs as Age, wretched in both—
I'll bear no more: no, you unnatural Haggs,
I will have ſuch Revenges on you both,
That all the world ſhall—I will do ſuch things
What they are yet I know not, but they ſhall be
The Terrors of the Earth; you think I'll weep, [*Thunder again.*
This Heart ſhall break into a thouſand pieces
Before I'll weep——O Gods! I ſhall go mad. [*Exit.*
Duke. 'Tis a wild Night, come out o'th' Storm. [*Exeunt.*

End of the Second Act.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE, *A Desert Heath.*

Enter Lear *and* Kent *in the Storm.*

Lear. BLOW Winds and burst your Cheeks, rage louder yet,
Fantastick Lightning singe, singe my white Head;
Spout Cataracts, and Hurricanos fall
Till you have drown'd the Towns and Palaces
Of proud ingratefull Man.

Kent. Not all my best intreaties can perswade him
Into some needfull shelter, or to 'bide
This poor slight Cov'ring on his aged Head
Expos'd to this wild war of Earth and Heav'n.

Lear. Rumble thy fill, fight Whirlwind, Rain and Fire:
Not Fire, Wind, Rain or Thunder are my Daughters:
I tax not you ye Elements with unkindness;
I never gave you Kingdoms, call'd you Children,
You owe me no Obedience, then let fall
Your horrible pleasure, here I stand your Slave,
A poor, infirm, weak and despis'd old man;
Yet I will call you servile Ministers,
That have with two pernicious Daughters join'd
Their high-engendred Battle against a Head
So Old and White as mine, Oh! oh! 'tis Foul.

Kent. Hard by, Sir, is a Hovel that will lend
Some shelter from this Tempest.

Lear. I will forget my Nature, what? so kind a Father,
I, there's the point.

Kent. Consider, good my Liege, Things that love Night
Love not such Nights as this; these wrathfull Skies
Frighten the very wanderers o'th' Dark,
And make 'em keep their Caves; such drenching Rain,
Such Sheets of Fire, such Claps of horrid Thunder,

Such

Such Groans of roaring Winds have ne're been known.
Lear. Let the Great Gods,
That keep this dreadfull pudder o're our Heads
Find out their Enemies now, tremble thou Wretch
That haſt within thee undiſcover'd Crimes.
Hide, thou bloody Hand,
Thou perjur'd Villain, holy, holy Hypocrite,
That drinkſt the Widows Tears, ſigh now and cry
Theſe dreadfull Summoners Grace, I am a Man
More ſin'd againſt than ſinning.
Kent. Good Sir, to th' Hovell.
Lear. My wit begins to burn,
Come on my Boy, how doſt my Boy? art Cold?
I'm cold my Self; ſhew me this Straw, my Fellow,
The Art of our Neceſſity is ſtrange,
And can make vile things precious; my poor Knave,
Cold as I am at Heart, I've one place There [Lond. *Storm.*
That's ſorry yet for Thee. [*Exit.*

Gloſter's *Palace.* *Enter* Baſtard.

Baſt. The Storm is in our louder Rev'lings drown'd.
Thus wou'd I Reign cou'd I but mount a Throne.
The Riots of theſe proud imperial Siſters
Already have impos'd the galling Yoke
Of Taxes, and hard Impoſitions on
The drudging Peaſants Neck, who bellow out
Their loud Complaints in Vain—Triumphant Queens!
With what Aſſurance do they tread the Crowd.
O for a Taſt of ſuch Majeſtick Beauty,
Which none but my hot Veins are fit t' engage;
Nor are my Wiſhes deſp'rate, for ev'n now
During the Banquet I obſerved their Glances
Shot thick at me, and as they left the Room
Each caſt by ſtealth a kind inviting Smile,
The happy Earneſt ——— ha!

Two Servants from ſeveral Entrances deliver him each a Letter, and Ex.

Where merit is ſo Tranſparent, not to behold it [*Reads.*
Were Blindneſs, and not to reward it Ingratitude.

Gonerill.

Enough! Blind, and Ingratefull ſhould I be
Not to Obey the Summons of This Oracle.
Now for a Second Letter. [*Opens the other.*
If Modeſty be not your Enemy, doubt not to
Find me your Friend.

Regan.

Excellent *Sybill!* O my glowing Blood!
I am already ſick of expectation,
And pant for the Poſſeſſion— here *Gloſter* comes
With Bus'neſs on his Brow; be huſht my Joys.

Gloſt. I come to ſeek thee, *Edmund*, to impart a buſineſs of Importance; I knew thy loyal Heart is toucht to ſee the Cruelty of theſe ingratefull Daughters againſt our royal Maſter.

Baſt. Moſt Savage and Unnatural.

Gloſt. This change in the State ſits uneaſie. The Commons repine aloud at their female Tyrants, already they Cry out for the re-inſtallment of their good old King, whoſe Injuries I fear will inflame 'em into Mutiny.

Baſt. 'Tis to be hopt, not fear'd.

Gloſt. Thou haſt it Boy, 'tis to be hopt indeed,
On me they caſt their Eyes, and hourly Court me
To lead 'em on, and whilſt this Head is Mine
I am Theirs, a little covert Craft, my Boy,
And then for open Action, 'twill be Employment
Worthy ſuch honeſt daring Souls as Thine.
Thou, *Edmund*, art my truſty Emiſſary,
Haſte on the Spur at the firſt break of day {*Gives him*
With theſe Diſpatches to the Duke of *Combray*; { *Letters.*
You know what mortal Feuds have alwaies flam'd
Between this Duke of *Cornwall*'s Family, and his
Full Twenty thouſand Mountaners
Th' invetrate Prince will ſend to our Aſſiſtance.
Diſpatch; Commend us to his Grace, and Proſper.

Baſt. Yes, credulous old Man, [*Aſide.*
I will commend you to his Grace,
His Grace the Duke of *Cornwall* — inſtantly

To

To ſhew him theſe Contents in thy own Character,
And Seal'd with thy own Signet; then forthwith
The Chol'rick Duke gives Sentence on thy Life;
And to my hand thy vaſt Revenues fall
To glut my Pleaſure that till now has ſtarv'd.

Gloſter *going off is met by* Cordelia *entring,* Baſtard *obſerving at a Diſtance.*

Cord. Turn, *Gloſter,* Turn, by all the ſacred Pow'rs
I do conjure you give my Griefs a Hearing,
You muſt, you ſhall, nay I am ſure you will,
For you were always ſtil'd the Juſt and Good.
Gloſt. What wou'dſt thou, Princeſs? riſe and ſpeak thy Griefs.
Cord. Nay, you ſhall promiſe to redreſs 'em too,
Or here I'll kneel for ever; I intreat
Thy ſuccour for a Father and a King,
An injur'd Father and an injur'd King.
Baſt. O charming Sorrow! how her Tears adorn her
Like Dew on Flow'rs, but ſhe is Virtuous,
And I muſt quench this hopeleſs Fire i'th' Kindling.
Gloſt. Conſider, Princeſs,
For whom thou begg'ſt, 'tis for the King that wrong'd Thee.
Cord. O name not that; he did not, cou'd not wrong me.
Nay muſe not, *Gloſter,* for it is too likely
This injur'd King e're this is paſt your Aid,
And gone Diſtracted with his ſavage Wrongs.
Baſt. I'll gaze no more—— and yet my Eyes are Charm'd.
Cord. Or what if it be Worſe? can there be Worſe?
As 'tis too probable this furious Night
Has pierc'd his tender Body, the bleak Winds
And cold Rain chill'd, or Lightning ſtruck him Dead;
If it be ſo your Promiſe is diſcharg'd,
And I have only one poor Boon to beg,
That you'd Convey me to his breathleſs Trunk,
With my torn Robes to wrap his hoary Head,
With my torn Hair to bind his Hands and Feet,
Then with a ſhow'r of Tears
To waſh his Clay-ſmear'd Cheeks, and Die beſide him.
Gloſt. Riſe, fair *Cordelia,* thou haſt Piety

Enough t' attone for both thy Siſters Crimes.
I have already plotted to reſtore
My injur'd Maſter, and thy Vertue tells me
We ſhall ſucceed, and ſuddenly. [*Exit.*

Cord. Diſpatch, *Arante*,
Provide me a Diſguiſe, we'll inſtantly
Go ſeek the King, and bring him ſome Relief.

Ar. How, Madam? are you Ignorant
Of what your impious Siſters have decreed?
Immediate Death for any that relieve him.

Cord. I cannot dread the Furies in this caſe.

Ar. In ſuch a Night as This? Conſider, Madam,
For many Miles about there's ſcarce a Buſh
To ſhelter in.

Cord. Therefore no ſhelter for the King,
And more our Charity to find him out:
What have not Women dar'd for vicious Love,
And we'll be ſhining Proofs that they can dare
For Piety as much; blow Winds, and Lightnings fall,
Bold in my Virgin Innocence, I'il flie
My Royal Father to Relieve, or Die. [*Exit.*

Baſt. Provide me a Diſguiſe, we 'll inſtantly
Go ſeek the King:—— ha! ha! a lucky change,
That Vertue which I fear'd would be my hindrance
Has prov'd the Bond to my Deſign;
I 'll bribe two Ruffians that ſhall at a diſtance follow,
And ſeiſe 'em in ſome deſert Place, and there
Whilſt one retains her t' other ſhall return
T' inform me where ſhe 's Lodg'd; I'll be diſguis'd too.
Whilſt they are poching for me I 'll to the Duke
With theſe Diſpatches, then to th' Field
Where like the vig'rous *Jove* I will enjoy
This Semele in a Storm, 'twill deaf her Cries
Like Drums in Battle, leſt her Groans ſhou'd pierce
My pittying Ear, and make the amorous Fight leſs fierce.
[*Exit.*

Storm ſtill. The Field Scene. Enter Lear *and* Kent.

Kent. Here is the place, my Lord; good my Lord enter;

The

The Tyranny of this open Night 's too rough
For Nature to endure.

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my Lord, enter.

Lear. Wilt break my Heart?

Kent. Beſeech you, Sir.

Lear. Thou think'ſt 'tis much that this contentious Storm
Invades us to the Skin ſo, 'tis to thee
But where the greater Malady is fixt
The leſſer is ſcarce felt: the Tempeſt in my Mind
Do's from my Senſes take all feeling elſe
Save what beats there. Filial Ingratitude!
Is it not as this Mouth ſhou'd tear this Hand
For lifting Food to't? —— but I'll puniſh home.
No, I will weep no more; in ſuch a Night
To ſhut me out—— pour on, I will endure
In ſuch a Night as this: O *Regan*, *Gonerill*,
Your old kind Father whoſe frank heart gave All,
O that way madneſs lies, let me ſhun that,
No more of that.

Kent. See, my Lord, here's the Entrance.

Lear. Well, I'll go in
And paſs it all, I'll pray and then I'll ſleep:
Poor naked Wretches whereſoe're you are,
That 'bide the pelting of this pittileſs Storm,
How ſhall your houſeleſs Heads and unfed Sides
Suſtain this Shock? your raggedneſs defend you
From Seaſons ſuch as Theſe.
O I have ta'ne too little Care of this,
Take Phyſick, Pomp,
Expoſe thy ſelf to feel what Wretches feel,
That thou may'ſt caſt the ſuperflux to them,
And ſhew the Heav'ns more Juſt.

Edgar *in the Hovell.*

Five Fathom and a half, poor *Tom.*

Kent. What art thou that doſt grumble there i' th' Straw?
Come forth.

Edg. Away! The foul Fiend follows me—— through the
ſharp

ſharp Haw-thorn blows the cold Wind — Mum, Go to thy Bed and warm Thee. —— ha! what do I ſee? by all my Griefs the poor old King beheaded, [*Aſide.*
And drencht in this fow Storm, profeſſing *Syren*,
Are all your Proteſtations come to this?

Lear. Tell me, Fellow, diſt thou give all to thy Daughters?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor *Tom*, whom the foul Fiend has led through Fire and through Flame, through Buſhes and Boggs, that has laid Knives under his Pillow, and Halters in his Pue, that has made him proud of Heart to ride on a Bay-trotting Horſe over four inch'd Bridges, to courſe his own Shadow for a Traytor. —bleſs thy five Wits, *Tom*'s a cold [*Shivers.*] bleſs thee from Whirlwinds, Star-blaſting and Taking: do poor *Tom* ſome Charity, whom the foul Fiend vexes — Sa, ſa, there I could have him now, and there, and there agen.

Lear. Have his Daughters brought him to this paſs?
Cou'dſt thou ſave Nothing? didſt thou give 'em All?

Kent. He has no Daughters, Sir.

Lear. Death, Traytor, nothing cou'd have ſubdu'd Nature
To ſuch a Lowneſs but his unkind Daughters.

Edg. Pillicock ſat upon Pillicock Hill; Hallo, hallo, hallo.

Lear. Is it the faſhion that diſcarded Fathers
Should have ſuch little Mercy on their Fleſh?
Iudicious puniſhment, 'twas this Fleſh begot
Thoſe Pelican Daughters.

Edg. Take heed of the fow Fiend, obey thy Parents, keep thy Word juſtly, Swear not, commit not with Man's ſworn Spouſe, ſet not thy ſweet Heart on proud Array: *Tom*'s a Cold.

Lear. What haſt thou been?

Edg. A Serving-man proud of Heart, that curl'd my Hair, us'd Perfume and Waſhes; that ſerv'd the Luſt of my Miſtreſſes Heart, and did the Act of Darkneſs with her. Swore as many Oaths as I ſpoke Words, and broke 'em all in the ſweet Face of Heaven: Let not the Paint, nor the Patch, nor the ruſhing of Silks betray thy poor Heart to Woman, keep thy Foot out of Brothels, thy Hand out of Plackets, thy Pen from Creditors Books, and defie the foul Fiend —— ſtill through the Haw-thorn blows the cold Wind —— Seſs, Suum, Mun, Nonny,

Dolphin

Dolphin my Boy —— hiſt! the Boy, Seſey! ſoft let him Trot by.

Lear. Death, thou wert better in thy Grave, than thus to anſwer with thy uncover'd Body this Extremity of the Sky. And yet conſider him well, and Man's no more than This; Thou art indebted to the Worm for no Silk, to the Beaſt for no Hide, to the Cat for no Perfume —— ha! here's Two of us are Sophiſticated; Thou art the Thing it ſelf, unaccommated Man is no more than ſuch a poor bare forkt Animal as thou art.

Off, Off, ye vain Diſguiſes, empty Lendings,
I'll be my Original Self, quick, quick, Uncaſe me.

Kent. Defend his Wits, good Heaven!

Lear. One point I had forgot; what's your Name?

Edg. Poor *Tom* that eats the ſwimming Frog, the Wall-nut, and the Water-nut; that in the fury of his Heart when the foul Fiend rages eats Cow-dung for Sallets, ſwallows the old Rat and the Ditch-dog, that drinks the green Mantle of the ſtanding Pool that's whipt from Tithing to Tithing; that has Three Suits to his Back, Six Shirts to his Body,

Horſe to Ride, and Weapon to wear,
But Rats and Mice, and ſuch ſmall Deer
Have been *Tom*'s Food for Seven long Year.

Beware, my Follower; Peace, Smulkin; Peace, thou foul Fiend.

Lear. One word more, but be ſure true Councel; tell me, is a Madman a Gentleman, or a Yeoman?

Kent. I fear'd 't wou'd come to This, his Wits are gone.

Edg. Fraterreto calls me, and tells me, *Nero* is an Angler in the Lake of Darkneſs. Pray, Innocent, and beware the foul Fiend.

Lear. Right, ha! ha! was it not pleaſant to have a Thouſand with red hot Spits come hizzing in upon 'em?

Edg. My Tears begin to take his part ſo much
They marr my Counterfeiting.

Lear. The little Dogs and all, Trey, Blanch and Sweet-heart, ſee they Bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his Head at 'em; Avaunt ye Curs.

Be

Be thy Mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poyſons if it bite,
Maſtiff, Grey-hound, Mungrill, Grim,
Hound or Spanniel, Brach or Hym,
Bob-tail, Tight, or Trundle-tail,
Tom will make 'em weep and wail,
For with throwing thus my Head
Dogs leap the Hatch, and All are fled.

Ud, de, de, de. Se, ſe, ſe. Come march to Wakes, and Fairs, and Market-Towns,—— poor *Tom*, thy Horn is dry.

Lear. You Sir, I entertain you for One of my Hundred, only I do not like the faſhion of your Garments, you 'll ſay they 're *Perſian*, but no matter, let 'em be chang'd.

Enter Gloſter.

Edg. This is the foul *Flibertigibet*, he begins at Curfew and walks at firſt Cock, he gives the Web and the Pin, knits the Elf-lock, ſquints the Eye, and makes the Hair-lip, mildews the white Wheat, and hurts the poor Creature of the Earth;

Swithin footed Thrice the Cold,
He met the Night-mare and her Nine-fold,
'Twas there he did appoint her;
He bid her alight and her Troth plight,
And arroynt the Witch arroynt her.

Gloſt. What, has your Grace no better Company?

Edg. The Prince of Darkneſs is a Gentleman; *Modo* he is call'd, and *Mahu*.

Gloſt. Go with me, Sir, hard by I have a Tenant. My Duty cannot ſuffer me to obey in all your Daughters hard Commands, who have enjoyn'd me to make faſt my Doors, and let this Tyrannous Night take hold upon you. Yet have I ventur'd to come ſeek you out, and bring you where both Fire and Food is ready.

Kent. Good my Lord, take his offer.

Lear. Firſt let me talk with this Philoſopher,

Say,

Say, *Stagirite*, what is the Cauſe of Thunder.

Gloſt. Beſeech you, Sir, go with me.

Lear. I'll talk a Word with this ſame Learned *Theban*.
What is your Study?

Edg. How to prevent the Fiend, and to kill Vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you a Word in private.

Kent. His Wits are quite unſetled; Good Sir, let's force him hence.

Gloſt. Canſt blame him? his Daughters ſeek his Death; This Bedlam but diſturbs him the more. Fellow, be gone.

Edg. Child *Rowland* to the dark Tow'r came,
His Word was ſtill Fie, Fo, and Fum,
I ſmell the Bloud of a Britiſh Man.—— Oh Torture! [*Exit.*

Gloſt. Now, I prethee Friend, let's take him in our Arms, and carry him where he ſhall meet both Welcome, and Protection.
Good Sir, along with us.

Lear. You ſay right, let 'em Anatomize *Regan*, ſee what breeds about her Heart; is there any Cauſe in Nature for theſe hard Hearts?

Kent. Beſeech your Grace.

Lear. Hiſt! —Make no Noiſe, make no Noiſe —— ſo ſo; we'll to Supper i' th' Morning. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Cordelia *and* Arante.

Ar. Dear Madam, reſt ye here, our ſearch is Vain,
Look here's a ſhed, beſeech ye, enter here.

Cord. Prethee go in thy ſelf, ſeek thy own Eaſe,
Where the Mind's free, the Body's Delicate:
This Tempeſt but diverts me from the Thought
Of what wou'd hurt me more.

Enter Two Ruffians.

1 *Ruff.* We have dog'd 'em far enough, this Place is private,
I'll keep 'em Priſoners here within this Hovell,
Whilſt you return and bring Lord *Edmund* Hither;
But help me firſt to Houſe 'em.

2 *Ruff.* Nothing but this dear Devil [*Shows Gold.*

Shou'd have drawn me through all this Tempeſt;
But to our Work.

[*They ſeize* Cordelia *and* Arante, *who Shriek out.*

Soft, Madam, we are Friends, diſpatch, I ſay.

Cord. Help, Murder, help! Gods! ſome kind Thunderbolt
To ſtrike me Dead.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. What Cry was That? — ha, Women ſeiz'd by Ruffians?
Is this a Place and Time for Villany?
Avaunt ye Bloud-hounds. [*Drives 'em with his Quarter-ſtaff.*

Both. The Devil, the Devil! [*Run off.*

Edg. O ſpeak, what are ye that appear to be
O'th' tender Sex, and yet unguarded Wander
Through the dead Mazes of this dreadfull Night,
Where (tho' at full) the Clouded Moon ſcarce darts
Imperfect Glimmerings.

Cord. Firſt ſay what art thou
Our Guardian Angel, that wer't pleas'd t' aſſume
That horrid ſhape to fright the Raviſhers?
We 'll kneel to Thee.

Edg. O my tumultuous Bloud!
By all my trembling Veins *Cordelia*'s Voice!
Tis ſhe her ſelf! ——My Senſes ſure conform
To my wild Garb, and I am Mad indeed.

Cord. Whate're thou art, befriend a wretched Virgin,
And if thou canſt direct our weary ſearch.

Edg. Who relieves poor *Tom*, that ſleeps on the Nettle, with the Hedge-pig for his Pillow.

Whilſt Smug ply'd the Bellows
She truckt with her Fellows,
The Freckle-fac't Mab
Was a Blouze and a Drab,

Yet *Swithin* made *Oberon* jealous—— Oh! Torture.

Ar. Alack, Madam, a poor wandring Lunatick.

Cord. And yet his Language ſeem'd but now well temper'd.
Speak, Friend, to one more wretched than thy ſelf,

And

And if thou haſt one Interval of ſenſe,
Inform us if thou canſt where we may find
A poor old Man, who through this Heath has ſtray'd
The tedious Night—— Speak, ſaweſt thou ſuch a One?
Edg. The King, her Father, whom ſhe's come to ſeek
[*Aſide.*
Through all the Terrors of this Night. O Gods!
That ſuch amazing Piety, ſuch Tenderneſs
Shou'd yet to me be Cruel ——
Yes, Fair One, ſuch a One was lately here,
And is convey'd by ſome that came to ſeek him,
T' a Neighb'ring Cottage; but diſtinctly where,
I know not.
Cord. Bleſſings on 'em,
Let's find him out, *Arante*, for thou ſeeſt
We are in Heavens Protection. [*Going off.*
Edg. O *Cordelia!*
Cord. Ha! —Thou knowſt my Name.
Edg. As you did once know *Edgar's*.
Cord. Edgar!
Edg. The poor Remains of *Edgar*, what your Scorn
Has left him.
Cord. Do we wake, *Arante?*
Edg. My Father ſeeks my Life, which I preſerv'd
In hopes of ſome bleſt Minute to oblidge
Diſtreſt *Cordelia*, and the Gods have giv'n it;
That Thought alone prevail'd with me to take
This Frantick Dreſs, to make the Earth my Bed,
With theſe bare Limbs all change of Seaſons bide,
Noons ſcorching Heat, and Midnights piercing Cold,
To feed on Offals, and to drink with Herds,
To Combat with the Winds, and be the Sport
Of Clowns, or what 's more wretched yet, their Pity.
Ar. Was ever Tale ſo full of Miſery!
Edg. But ſuch a Fall as this I grant was due
To my aſpiring Love, for 'twas preſumptuous,
Though not preſumptuouſly perſu'd;
For well you know I wore my Flames conceal'd,
And ſilent as the Lamps that Burn in Tombs,
'Till you perceiv'd my Grief, with modeſt Grace

Drew forth the Secret, and then ſeal'd my Pardon.
Cord. You had your Pardon, nor can you Challenge more.
Edg. What do I Challenge more?
Such Vanity agrees not with theſe Rags;
When in my proſp'rous State rich *Gloſter*'s Heir,
You ſilenc'd my Pretences, and enjoyn'd me
To trouble you upon that Theam no more;
Then what Reception muſt Love's Language find
From theſe bare Limbs and Beggers humble Weeds?
Cord. Such as the Voice of Pardon to a Wretch Condemn'd;
Such as the Shouts
Of ſucc'ring Forces to a Town beſieg'd.
Edg. Ah! what new Method now of Cruelty?
Cord. Come to my Arms, thou deareſt, beſt of Men,
And take the kindeſt Vows that e're were ſpoke
By a proteſting Maid.
Edg. Is't poſſible?
Cord. By the dear Vital Stream that baths my Heart,
Theſe hallow'd Rags of Thine, and naked Vertue,
Theſe abject Taſſels, theſe fantaſtick Shreds,
(Ridiculous ev'n to the meaneſt Clown)
To me are dearer than the richeſt Pomp
Of purple Monarchs.
Edg. Generous charming Maid,
The Gods alone that made, can rate thy Worth!
This moſt amazing Excellence ſhall be
Fame's Triumph, in ſucceeding Ages, when
Thy bright Example ſhall adorn the Scene,
And teach the World Perfection.
Cord. Cold and weary,
We'll reſt a while, *Arante*, on that Straw,
Then forward to find out the poor Old King.
Edg. Look I have Flint and Steel, the Implements
Of wandring Lunaticks, I'll ſtrike a Light,
And make a Fire beneath this Shed, to dry
Thy Storm-drencht Garments, e're thou Lie to reſt thee;
Then Fierce and Wakefull as th' *Heſperian* Dragon,
I'll watch beſide thee to protect thy Sleep;
Mean while, the Stars ſhall dart their kindeſt Beams,
And Angels Viſit my *Cordelia*'s Dreams [*Exeunt.*

SCENE,

SCENE, *The Palace.*

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Baſtard, *Servants.* Cornwall *with* Gloſter's *Letters.*

Duke. I will have my Revenge e're I depart his houſe.
Regan, ſee here, a Plot upon our State,
'Tis *Gloſter*'s Character, that has betray'd
His double Truſt of Subject, and of Oſt.
Reg. Then double be our Vengeance, this confirms
Th' Intelligence that we now now receiv'd,
That he has been this Night to ſeek the King;
But who, Sir, was the kind Diſcoverer?
Duke. Our Eagle, quick to ſpy, and fierce to ſeize,
Our truſty *Edmund.*
Reg. 'Twas a noble Service;
O *Cornwall*, take him to thy deepeſt Truſt,
And wear him as a Jewel at thy Heart.
Baſt. Think, Sir, how hard a Fortune I ſuſtain,
That makes me thus repent of ſerving you! [*Weeps.*
O that this Treaſon had not been, or I
Not the Diſcoverer.
Duke. Edmund, Thou ſhalt find
A Father in our Love, and from this Minute
We call thee Earl of *Gloſter*; but there yet
Remains another Juſtice to be done,
And that's to puniſh this diſcarded Traytor;
But leaſt thy tender Nature ſhou'd relent
At his juſt Sufferings, nor brooke the Sight,
We wiſh thee to withdraw.
Reg. The *Grotto*, Sir, within the lower Grove, { *To* Edmund
Has Privacy to ſuit a Mourner's Thought. { *Aſide.*
Baſt. And there I may expect a Comforter,
Ha, Madam?
Reg. What may happen, Sir, I know not,
But 'twas a Friends Advice. [*Ex.* Baſtard.
Duke. Bring in the Traytour.

Gloſter.

Gloſter *brought in.*

Bind faſt his Arms.
Gloſt. What mean your Graces?
You are my Gueſts, pray do me no foul Play.
Duke. Bind him, I ſay, hard, harder yet.
Reg. Now, Traytor, thou ſhalt find——
Duke. Speak, Rebel, where haſt thou ſent the King?
Whom ſpight of our Decree thou ſaw'ſt laſt Night.
Gloſt. I'm tide to th'Stake, and I muſt ſtand the Courſe.
Reg. Say where, and why thou haſt conceal'd him.
Gloſt. Becauſe I wou'd not ſee thy cruel Hands
Tear out his poor old Eyes, nor thy fierce Siſter
Carve his anointed Fleſh; but I ſhall ſee
The ſwift wing'd Vengeance overtake ſuch Children.
Duke. See't ſhalt thou never, Slaves perform your Work,
Out with thoſe treacherous Eyes, diſpatch, I ſay,
If thou ſeeſt Vengeance ——
Gloſt. He that will think to live 'till he be old,
Give me ſome help—— O cruel! oh! ye Gods.
[*They put out his Eyes.*
Serv. Hold, hold, my Lord, I bar your Cruelty,
I cannot love your ſafety and give way
To ſuch a barbarous Practiſe.
Duke. Ha, my Villain.
Serv. I have been your Servant from my Infancy,
But better Service have I never done you
Then with this Boldneſs——
Duke. Take thy Death, Slave.
Serv. Nay, then Revenge whilſt yet my Bloud is Warm.
[*Fight.*
Reg. Help here—— are you not hurt, my Lord?
Gloſt. Edmund, enkindle all the ſparks of Nature
To quit this horrid Act.
Reg. Out, treacherous Villain,
Thou call'ſt on him that Hates thee, it was He
That broacht thy Treaſon, ſhew'd us thy Diſpatches;
There—— read, and ſave the *Cambrian* Prince a Labour,
If thy Eyes fail thee call for Spectacles.

Gloſt.

Gloſt. O my Folly!
Then *Edgar* was abus'd, kind Gods forgive me that.
Reg. How is't, my Lord?
Duke. Turn out that Eye-leſs Villain, let him ſmell
His way to *Cambray*, throw this Slave upon a Dunghill.
Regan, I Bleed apace, give me your Arm. [*Exeunt.*
Gloſt. All Dark and Comfortleſs!
Where are thoſe various Objects that but now
Employ'd my buſie Eyes? where thoſe Eyes?
Dead are their piercing Rays that lately ſhot
O're flowry Vales to diſtant Sunny Hills,
And drew with Joy the vaſt Horizon in.
Theſe groping Hands are now my only Guids,
And Feeling all my Sight.
O Miſery! what words can ſound my Grief?
Shut from the Living whilſt among the Living;
Dark as the Grave amidſt the buſtling World.
At once from Buſineſs and from Pleaſure bar'd;
No more to view the Beauty of the Spring,
Nor ſee the Face of Kindred, or of Friend.
Yet ſtill one way th' extreameſt Fate affords,
And ev'n the Blind can find the Way to Death.
Muſt I then tamely Die, and unreveng'd?
So *Lear* may fall: No, with theſe bleeding Rings
I will preſent me to the pittying Crowd,
And with the Rhetorick of theſe dropping Veins
Enflame 'em to Revenge their King and me;
Then when the Glorious Miſchief is on Wing,
This Lumber from ſome Precipice I'll throw,
And daſh it on the ragged Flint below;
Whence my freed Soul to her bright Sphear ſhall fly,
Through boundleſs Orbs, eternal Regions ſpy,
And like the Sun, be All one glorious Eye.
[*Ex.*

End of the Third Act.

ACT

ACT IV.

A Grotto.

Edmund *and* Regan *amorouſly Seated, Liſtning to Muſick.*

Baſt. WHY were thoſe Beauties made Another's Right
Which None can prize like Me? charming Queen
Take all my blooming Youth, for ever fold me
In thoſe ſoft Arms, Lull me in endleſs Sleep
That I may dream of pleaſures too tranſporting
For Life to bear.

Reg. Live, live, my *Gloſter*,
And feel no Death but that of ſwooning joy,
I yield thee Bliſſes on no harder Terms
Than that thou continue to be Happy.

Baſt. This Jealouſie is yet more kind, is't poſſible
That I ſhould wander from a Paradiſe
To feed on ſickly Weeds? ſuch Sweets live here
That Conſtancy will be no Vertue in me,
And yet muſt I forthwith go meet her Siſter, [*Aſide.*
To whom I muſt proteſt as much ———
Suppoſe it be the ſame; why beſt of all,
And I have then my Leſſon ready conn'd.

Reg. Wear this Remembrance of me— I dare now
[*Gives him a Ring.*
Abſent my ſelf no longer from the Duke
Whoſe Wound grows Dangerous— I hope Mortal.

Baſt. And let this happy Image of your *Gloſter*,
[*Pulling out a Picture drops a Note.*
Lodge in that Breaſt where all his Treaſure lies. [*Exit.*

Reg. To this brave Youth a Womans blooming beauties
Are due: my Fool uſurps my Bed— What's here?
Confuſion on my Eyes. [*Reads.*

Where Merit is ſo Tranſparent, not to behold it were Blindneſs, and not to reward it, Ingratitude.

Gonerill.

Vexatious

Vexatious Accident! yet Fortunate too,
My Jealouſie's confirm'd, and I am taught
To caſt for my Defence——— [*Enter an Officer.*
Now, what mean thoſe Shouts? and what thy haſty Entrance?
Off. A moſt ſurprizing and a ſudden Change,
The Peaſants are all up in Mutiny,
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on
To Storm your Palace.
Reg. On what Provocation?
Off. At laſt day's publick Feſtival, to which
The Yeomen from all Quarters had repair'd,
Old *Gloſter*, whom you late depriv'd of Sight,
(His Veins yet Streaming freſh) preſents himſelf,
Proclaims your Cruelty, and their Oppreſſion,
With the King's Injuries; which ſo ei rag'd 'em,
That now that Mutiny which long had crept
Takes Wing, and threatens your Beſt Pow'rs.
Reg. White-liver'd Slave!
Our Forces rais'd and led by Valiant *Edmund*,
Shall drive this Monſter of Rebellion back
To her dark Cell; young *Gloſter*'s Arm allays
The Storm, his Father's feeble Breath did Raiſe. [*Exit.*

The Field SCENE, *Enter* Edgar.

Edg. The loweſt and moſt abject Thing of Fortune
Stands ſtill in Hope, and is ſecure from Fear,
The lamentable Change is from the Beſt,
The Worſt returns to Better—— who comes here
[*Enter* Gloſter, *led by an old Man.*
My Father poorly led? depriv'd of Sight,
The precious Stones torn from their bleeding Rings!
Some-thing I heard of this inhumane Deed
But disbeliev'd it, as an Act too horrid
For the hot Hell of a curſt Woman's fury,
When will the meaſure of my woes be full?
Gloſt. Revenge, thou art afoot, Succeſs attend Thee.
Well have I ſold my Eyes, if the Event
Prove happy for the injur'd King.

Old M. O, my good Lord, I have been your Tenant, and your Father's Tenant theſe Fourſcore years.

Gloſt. Away, get thee Away, good Friend, be gone,
Thy Comforts can do me no good at All,
Thee they may hurt.

Old M. You cannot ſee your Way.

Gloſt. I have no Way, and therefore want no Eyes,
I ſtumbled when I ſaw: O dear Son *Edgar*,
The Food of thy abuſed Father's Wrath,
Might I but live to ſee thee in my Touch
I'd ſay, I had Eyes agen.

Edg. Alas, he's ſenſible that I was wrong'd,
And ſhou'd I own my Self, his tender Heart
Would break betwixt th' extreams of Grief and Joy.

Old M. How now, who's There?

Edg. A Charity for poor *Tom.* Play fair, and defie the foul Fiend.
O Gods! and muſt I ſtill perſue this Trade, [*Aſide.*
Trifling beneath ſuch Loads of Miſery?

Old M. 'Tis poor mad *Tom.*

Gloſt. In the late Storm I ſuch a Fellow ſaw,
Which made me think a Man a Worm,
Where is the Lunatick?

Old M. Here, my Lord.

Gloſt. Get thee now away, if for my ſake
Thou wilt o're-take us hence a Mile or Two
I' th' way tow'rd *Dover*, do't for ancient Love,
And bring ſome cov'ring for this naked Wretch
Whom I'll intreat to lead me.

Old M. Alack, my Lord, He's Mad.

Gloſt. 'Tis the Time's Plague when Mad-men lead the Blind.
Do as I bid thee.

Old M. I'll bring him the beſt 'Parrel that I have
Come on't what will. [*Exit.*

Gloſt. Sirrah, naked Fellow.

Edg. Poor *Tom*'s a cold;—— I cannot fool it longer,
And yet I muſt—— bleſs thy ſweet Eyes they Bleed,
Believe't poor *Tom* ev'n weeps his Blind to ſee 'em.

Gloſt. Know'ſt thou the way to *Dover?*

Edg. Both Stile and Gate, Horſe-way and Foot-path, poor *Tom*

Tom has been ſcar'd out of his good Wits; bleſs every true Man's Son from the foul Fiend.

Gloſt. Here, take this Purſe, that I am wretched
Makes thee the Happier, Heav'n deal ſo ſtill.
Thus let the griping Uſerers Hoard be Scatter'd,
So Diſtribution ſhall undo Exceſs,
And each Man have enough. Doſt thou know *Dover?*

Edg. I, Maſter.

Gloſt. There is a Cliff, whoſe high and bending Head
Looks dreadfully down on the roaring Deep.
Bring me but to the very Brink of it,
And I'll repair the Poverty thou bearſt
With ſomething Rich about me, from that Place
I ſhall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy Arm: poor *Tom* ſhall guid thee.

Gloſt. Soft, for I hear the Tread of Paſſengers.

Enter Kent *and* Cordelia.

Cord. Ah me! your Fear's too true, it was the King;
I ſpoke but now with ſome that met him
As Mad as the vext Sea, Singing aloud,
Crown'd with rank Femiter and furrow Weeds,
With Berries, Burdocks, Violets, Dazies, Poppies,
And all the idle Flow'rs that grow
In our ſuſtaining Corn, conduct me to him
To prove my laſt Endeavours to reſtore him,
And Heav'n ſo proſper thee.

Kent. I will, good Lady.
Ha, *Gloſter* here! — turn, poor dark Man, and hear
A Friend's Condolement, who at Sight of thine
Forgets his own Diſtreſs, thy old true *Kent.*

Gloſt. How, *Kent?* from whence return'd?

Kent. I have not ſince my Baniſhment been abſent,
But in Diſguiſe follow'd the abandon'd King;
'Twas me thou ſaw'ſt with him in the late Storm.

Gloſt. Let me embrace thee, had I Eyes I now
Should weep for Joy, but let this trickling Blood
Suffice inſtead of Tears.

Cord. O miſery!

To whom ſhall I complain, or in what Language?
Forgive, O wretched Man, the Piety
That brought thee to this paſs, 'twas I that caus'd it,
I caſt me at thy Feet, and beg of thee
To cruſh theſe weeping Eyes to equal Darkneſs,
If that will give thee any Recompence.
Edg. Was ever Seaſon ſo diſtreſt as This? [*Aſide.*
Gloſt. I think *Cordelia*'s Voice! riſe, pious Princeſs,
And take a dark Man's Bleſſing.
Cord. O, my *Edgar*,
My Vertue's now grown Guilty, works the Bane
Of thoſe that do befriend me, Heav'n forſakes me,
And when you look that Way, it is but Juſt
That you ſhou'd hate me too.
Edg. O wave this cutting Speech, and ſpare to wound
A Heart that's on the Rack.
Gloſt. No longer cloud thee, *Kent*, in that Diſguiſe,
There's buſineſs for thee and of nobleſt weight;
Our injur'd Country is at length in Arms,
Urg'd by the King's inhumane Wrongs and Mine,
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on.
That Task be Thine.
Edg. Brave *Britains* then there's Life in't yet. [*Aſide.*
Kent. Then have we one caſt for our Fortune yet.
Come, Princeſs, I'll beſtow you with the King,
Then on the Spur to Head theſe Forces.
Farewell, good *Gloſter*, to our Conduct truſt.
Gloſt. And be your Cauſe as Proſp'rous as tis Juſt. [*Exeunt.*

Gonerill's *Palace.* *Enter* Gonerill, *Attendants.*

Gon. It was great Ignorance *Gloſter*'s Eyes being out
To let him live, where he arrives he moves
All Hearts againſt us, *Edmund* I think is gone
In pity to his Miſery to diſpatch him.
Gent. No, Madam, he's return'd on ſpeedy Summons
Back to your Siſter.
Gon. Ha! I like not That,
Such ſpeed muſt have the Wings of Love; where's *Albany*.
Gent. Madam, within, but never Man ſo chang'd;

I told

I told him of the uproar of the Peaſants,
He ſmil'd at it, when I inform'd him
Of *Gloſter*'s Treaſon ——
Gon. Trouble him no further,
It is his coward Spirit, back to our Siſter,
Haſten her Muſters, and let her know
I have giv'n the Diſtaff into my Husband's Hands.
That done, with ſpecial Care deliver theſe Diſpatches
In private to young *Gloſter*.

Enter a Meſſenger.

Meſſ. O Madam, moſt unſeaſonable News,
The Duke of *Cornwall*'s Dead of his late Wound,
Whoſe loſs your Siſter has in part ſupply'd,
Making brave *Edmund* General of her Forces.
Gon. One way I like this well;
But being Widow and my *Gloſter* with her
May blaſt the promis'd Harveſt of our Love.
A word more, Sir,—— add Speed to your Journey,
And if you chance to meet with that blind Traytor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off. [*Exeunt.*

Field SCENE. Gloſter *and* Edgar.

Gloſt. When ſhall we come to th' Top of that ſame Hill?
Edg. We climb it now, mark how we Labour.
Gloſt. Methinks the Ground is even.
Edg. Horrible Steep; heark, do you hear the Sea?
Gloſt. No truly.
Edg. Why then your other Senſes grow imperfect,
By your Eyes Anguiſh.
Gloſt. So may it be indeed.
Methinks thy Voice is alter'd, and thou ſpeak'ſt
In better Phraſe and Matter than thou did'ſt.
Edg. You are much deceiv'd, in nothing am I Alter'd
But in my Garments.
Gloſt. Methinks y'are better Spoken.
Edg. Come on, Sir, here's the Place, how fearfull

And

And dizy 'tis to caſt one's Eyes ſo Low.
The Crows and Choughs that wing the Mid-way Air
Shew ſcarce ſo big as Beetles, half way down
Hangs one that gathers Sampire, dreadfull Trade!
The Fiſher-men that walk upon the Beach
Appear like Mice, and yon tall Anch'ring Barque
Seems leſſen'd to her Cock, her Cock a Buoy
Almoſt too ſmall for Sight; the murmuring Surge
Cannot be heard ſo high, I'll look no more
Leſt my Brain turn, and the diſorder make me
Tumble down head long.

Gloſt. Set me where you ſtand.

Edg. You are now within a Foot of th' extream Verge.
For all beneath the Moon I wou'd not now
Leap forward.

Gloſt. Let go my Hand,
Here, Friend, is another Purſe, in it a Jewel
Well worth a poor Man's taking; get thee further,
Bid me Farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Fare you well, Sir,—— that I do Trifle thus
With this his Deſpair is with Deſign to cure it.

Gloſt. Thus, mighty Gods, this World I do renounce,
And in your Sight ſhake my Afflictions off;
If I cou'd bear 'em longer and not fall
To quarrel with your great oppoſeleſs Wills,
My Snuff and feebler Part of Nature ſhou'd
Burn it ſelf out; if *Edgar* Live, O Bleſs him.
Now, Fellow, fare thee well.

Edg. Gone, Sir! Farewell.
And yet I know not how Conceit may rob
The Treaſury of Life, had he been where he thought,
By this had Thought been paſt—— Alive, or Dead?
Hoa Sir, Friend; hear you, Sir, ſpeak——
Thus might he paſs indeed—— yet he revives.
What are you, Sir?

Gloſt. Away, and let me Die.

Edg. Hadſt thou been ought but Goſmore, Feathers, Air,
Falling ſo many Fathom down
Thou hadſt Shiver'd like an Egg; but thou doſt breath
Haſt heavy Subſtance, bleedſt not, ſpeak'ſt, art ſound;

Thy

Thy Live's a Miracle.
Gloſt. But have I faln or no?
Edg. From the dread Summet of this chalky Bourn:
Look up an Height, the Shrill-tun'd Lark ſo high
Cannot be ſeen, or heard; do but look up.
Gloſt. Alack, I have no Eyes.
Is wretchedneſs depriv'd that Benefit
To End it ſelf by Death?
Edg. Give me your Arm.
Up, ſo, how is't? feel you your Legs? you ſtand.
Gloſt. Too well, too well.
Edg. Upon the Crow o'th' Cliff, what Thing was that
Which parted from you?
Gloſt. A poor unfortunate Begger.
Edg. As I ſtood here below, me-thought his Eyes
Were two Full Moons, wide Noſtrils breathing Fire.
It was ſome Fiend, therefore thou happy Father,
Think that th'all-powerfull Gods who make them Honours
Of Mens Impoſſibilities have preſerv'd thee.
Gloſt. 'Tis wonderfull; henceforth I'll bear Affliction
Till it expire; the Goblin which you ſpeak of,
I took it for a Man: oft-times 'twould ſay,
The Fiend, the Fiend: He led me to that Place.
Edg. Bear free and patient Thoughts: but who comes here?

Enter Lear, *a Coronet of Flowers on his Head. Wreaths and Garlands about him.*

Lear. No, no, they cannot touch me for Coyning, I am the King Himſelf.
Edg. O piercing Sight.
Lear. Nature's above Art in that Reſpect; There's your Preſs-money: that Fellow handles his Bow like a Cow-keeper, ———draw me a Clothier's yard. A Mouſe, a Mouſe; peace hoa: there's my Gauntlet, I'll prove it on a Giant: bring up the brown Bills: O well flown Bird; i'th' White, i'th' White — Hewgh! give the Word.
Edg. Sweet *Marjorum.*
Lear. Paſs.
Gloſt. I know that Voice.

Lear.

Lear. Ha! *Gonerill* with a white Beard! they flatter'd me like a Dog, and told me I had white Hairs on my Chin, before the Black ones were there; to ſay I and No to every thing that I ſaid, I and No too was no good Divinity. When the Rain came once to wet me, and the Winds to make me Chatter; when the Thunder wou'd not Peace at my Bidding. There I found 'em, there I ſmelt 'em out; go too, they are not men of their words, They told me I was a King, 'tis a Lie, I am not Ague proof.

Gloſt. That Voice I well remember, is't not the King's?

Lear. I, every Inch a King, when I do Stare
See how the Subject quakes.
I pardon that Man's Life, what was the Cauſe?
Adultery? Thou ſhalt not Die. Die for Adultery!
The Wren goes to't, and the ſmall gilded Flie
Engenders in my Sight: Let Copulation thrive,
For *Gloſter's* Baſtard Son was kinder to his Father
Than were my Daughters got i'th' lawfull Bed.
To't Luxury, pell mell, for I lack Souldiers.

Gloſt. Not all my Sorrows paſt ſo deep have toucht me,
As the ſad Accents: Sight were now a Torment——

Lear. Behold that ſimp'ring Lady, ſhe that ſtarts
At Pleaſure's Name, and thinks her Ear profan'd
With the leaſt wanton Word, wou'd you believe it,
The Fitcher nor the pamper'd Steed goes to't
With ſuch a riotous Appetite: down from the Waſt they are Centaurs, tho Women all Above; but to the Girdle do the Gods inherit, beneath is all the Fiends; There's Hell, there's Darkneſs, the Sulphurous unfathom'd —— Fie! fie! pah! —— an Ounce of Civet, good Apothecary, to ſweeten my Imagination—— There's Money for thee.

Gloſt. Let me kiſs that Hand.

Lear. Let we wipe it firſt; it ſmells of Mortality.

Gloſt. Speak, Sir; do you know me?

Lear. I remember thy Eyes well enough: Nay, do thy worſt, blind *Cupid,* I'll not Love—— read me this Challenge, mark but the penning of it.

Gloſt. Were all the Letters Suns I cou'd not ſee.

Edg. I wou'd not take this from Report: wretched *Cordelia,*
What will thy Vertue do when thou ſhalt find
This freſh Affliction added to the Tale

Of

Of thy unparrallel'd Griefs.

Lear. Read.

Gloſt. What with this Caſe of Eyes?

Lear. O ho! are you there with me? no Eyes in your Head, and no money in your Purſe? yet you ſee how this World goes.

Gloſt. I ſee it Feelingly.

Lear. What? art Mad? a Man may ſee how this World goes with no Eyes. Look with thy Ears, ſee how yon Juſtice rails on that ſimple Thief; ſhake 'em together, and the firſt that drops, be it Thief or Juſtice, is a Villain. —— Thou haſt ſeen a Farmer's Dog bark at a Beggar.

Gloſt. I, Sir.

Lear. And the Man ran from the Curr; there thou mightſt behold the great Image of Authority, a Dog's obey'd in Office. Thou Raſcal, Beadle, hold thy bloody Hand, why doſt thou Laſh that Strumpet? thou hotly Luſt'ſt to enjoy her in that kind for which thou whipſt her, do, do, the Judge that ſentenc'd her has been before-hand with thee.

Gloſt. How ſtiff is my vile Senſe that yields not yet?

Lear. I tell thee the Uſurer hangs the Couz'ner, through tatter'd Robes ſmall Vices do appear, Robes and Fur-gowns hide All: Place Sins with Gold, why there 'tis for thee, my Friend, make much of it, it has the Pow'r to ſeal the Accuſer's Lips. Get thee glaſs Eyes, and like a ſcurvy Politician, ſeem to ſee the Things thou doſt not. Pull, pull off my Boots, hard, harder, ſo, ſo.

Gloſt. O Matter and Impertinency mixt
Reaſon in Madneſs.

Lear. If thou wilt weep my Fortunes take my Eyes,
I know thee well enough, thy Name is *Gloſter*.
Thou muſt be patient, we came Crying hither
Thou knowſt, the firſt time that We taſt the Air
We Wail and Cry—— I'll preach to thee, Mark.

Edg. Break lab'ring Heart.

Lear. When we are Born we Cry that we are come
To this great Stage of Fools. ———

Enter Two or Three Gentlemen.

Gent. O here he is, lay hand upon him, Sir,

Your deareſt Daughter ſends ——

Lear. No Reſcue? what, a Priſoner? I am even the natural Fool of Fortune: Uſe me well, you ſhall have Ranſome—— let me have Surgeons, Oh I am cut to th' Brains.

Gent. You ſhall have any Thing.

Lear. No Second's? all my Self? I will Die bravely like a ſmug Bridegroom, fluſht and pamper'd as a Prieſt's Whore. I am a King, my Maſters, know ye that?

Gent. You are a Royal one, and we Obey you.

Lear. It were an excellent Stratagem to Shoe a Troop of Horſe with Felt, I'll put in proof—— no Noiſe, no Noiſe—— now will we ſteal upon theſe Sons in Law, and then —Kill, kill, kill, kill! [*Ex. Running.*

Gloſt. A Sight moſt moving in the meaneſt Wretch,
Paſt ſpeaking in a King. Now, good Sir, what are you?

Edg. A moſt poor Man made tame to Fortune's ſtrokes,
And prone to Pity by experienc'd Sorrows; give me your Hand.

Gloſt. You ever gentle Gods take my Breath from me,
And let not my ill Genius tempt me more
To Die before you pleaſe.

Enter Gonerill's *Gentleman Uſher.*

Gent. A proclaim'd Prize, O moſt happily met,
That Eye-leſs Head of thine was firſt fram'd Fleſh
To raiſe my Fortunes; Thou old unhappy Traytor,
The Sword is out that muſt Deſtroy thee.

Gloſt. Now let thy friendly Hand put Strength enough to't.

Gent. Wherefore, bold Peaſant,
Darſt thou ſupport a publiſht Traytor, hence,
Leſt I deſtroy Thee too. Let go his Arm.

Edg. 'Chill not Let go Zir, without vurther 'Caſion.

Gent. Let go Slave, or thou Dyeſt.

Edg. Good Gentleman go your Gate, and let poor Volk paſs, and 'Chu'd ha' bin Zwagger'd out of my Life it wou'd not a bin zo long as 'tis by a Vort-night —— Nay, an' thou com'ſt near th' old Man, I'ce try whether your Coſtard or my Ballow be th' harder.

Gent. Out, Dunghill.

Edg. 'Chill

Edg. 'Chill pick your Teeth, Zir; Come, no matter vor your Voines.

Gent. Slave, thou haſt Slain me; oh untimely Death.

Edg. I know thee well, a ſerviceable Villain,
As duteous to the Vices of thy Miſtreſs
As Luſt cou'd wiſh.

Gloſt. What, is he Dead?

Edg. Sit you, Sir, and reſt you.
This is a Letter Carrier, and may have
Some Papers of Intelligence that may ſtand
Our Party in good ſtead, to know—— what's here?
[*Takes a Letter out of his Pocket, opens, and reads.*
To *Edmund* Earl of *Gloſter.*

Let our Mutual Loves be remembred, you have many opportunities to Cut him off, if he return the Conqueror then I am ſtill a Priſoner, and his Bed my Goal, from the loath'd Warmth of which deliver me, and ſupply the Place for your Labour.

Gonerill.

A Plot upon her Husband's Life,
And the Exchange my Brother—here i'th' Sands.
I'll rake thee up thou Meſſenger of Luſt,
Griev'd only that thou hadſt no other Deaths-man.
In Time and Place convenient I'll produce
Theſe Letters to the Sight of th' injur'd Duke
As beſt ſhall ſerve our Purpoſe; Come, your Hand.
Far off methinks I hear the beaten Drum,
Come, Sir, I will beſtow you with a Friend. [*Exeunt.*

A Chamber. Lear *a Sleep on a Couch*; Cordelia, *and Attendants ſtanding by him.*

Cord. His Sleep is ſound, and may have good Effect
To Cure his jarring Senſes, and repair
This Breach of Nature.

Phyſ. We have employ'd the utmoſt Pow'r of Art,
And this deep Reſt will perfect our Deſign.

Cord. O *Regan, Gonerill,* inhumane Siſters,
Had he not been your Father, theſe white Hairs
Had challeng'd ſure ſome pity, was this a Face

To be expos'd againſt the jarring Winds?
My Enemy's Dog though he had bit me ſhou'd
Have ſtood that Night againſt my Fire —— he wakes, ſpeak to him.

Gent. Madam, do you, 'tis fitteſt.

Cord. How do's my royal Lord? how fares your Majeſty?

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o'th' Grave.
Ha! is this too a World of Cruelty?
I know my Priviledge, think not that I will
Be us'd ſtill like a wretched Mortal, no,
No more of That.

Cord. Speak to me, Sir, who am I?

Lear. You are a Soul in Bliſs, but I am bound
Upon a wheel of Fire, which my own Tears
Do ſcald like Molten Lead.

Cord. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a Spirit, I know, where did you Die?

Cord. Still, ſtill, far wide.

Phyſ. Madam, he's ſcarce awake; he'll ſoon grow more compos'd.

Lear. Where have I been? where am I? fair Day-light!
I am mightily abus'd, I ſhou'd ev'n Die with pity
To ſee Another thus. I will not ſwear
Theſe are my Hands.

Cord. O look upon me, Sir,
And hold your Hands in Bleſſing o're me, nay,
You muſt not kneel.

Lear. Pray do not mock me.
I am a very fooliſh fond Old Man,
Fourſcore and upward, and to deal plainly with you,
I fear I am not in my perfect Mind.

Cord. Nay, then farewell to patience; witneſs for me
Ye mighty Pow'rs, I ne're complain'd till now!

Lear. Methinks I ſhou'd know you, and know this Man,
Yet I am Doubtfull, for I am mainly Ignorant
What Place this is, and all the skill I have
Remembers not theſe Garments, nor do I know
Where I did Sleep laſt Night—— pray do not mock me—
For, as I am a Man, I think that Lady
To be my Child *Cordelia.*

Cord. O

Cord. O my dear, dear Father!
Lear. Be your Tears wet? yes faith; pray do not weep,
I know I have giv'n thee Cauſe, and am ſo humbled
With Croſſes ſince, that I cou'd ask
Forgiveneſs of thee were it poſſible
That thou cou'dſt grant it, but I'm well aſſur'd
Thou canſt not; therefore I do ſtand thy Juſtice,
If thou haſt Poyſon for me I will Drink it,
Bleſs thee and Die.
Cord. O pity, Sir, a bleeding Heart, and ceaſe
This killing Language.
Lear. Tell me, Friends, where am I?
Gent. In your own Kingdom, Sir.
Lear. Do not Abuſe me.
Gent. Be comforted, good Madam, for the Violence
Of his Diſtemper's paſt; we'll lead him in
Nor trouble him, till he is better Setled.
Wilt pleaſe you, Sir, walk into freer Air.
Lear. You muſt bear with me, I am Old and Fooliſh.
[*They lead him off.*
Cord. The Gods reſtore you — heark, I hear afar
The beaten Drum, Old *Kent*'s a Man of's Word.
O for an Arm
Like the fierce Thunderer's, when th' earth-born Sons
Storm'd Heav'n, to fight this injur'd Father's Battle.
That I cou'd ſhift my Sex, and die me deep
In his Oppoſer's Blood, but as I may
With Womens Weapons, Piety and Pray'rs,
I'll aid his Cauſe——— You never-erring Gods
Fight on his ſide, and Thunder on his Foes
Such Tempeſt as his poor ag'd Head ſuſtain'd;
Your Image ſuffers when a Monarch bleeds.
'Tis your own Cauſe, for that your Succours bring,
Revenge your Selves, and right an injur'd King.

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE, *A Camp.*

Enter Gonerill *and Attendants.*

Gon. OUR Sisters Pow'rs already are arriv'd,
And She her self has promis'd to prevent
The Night with her Approach: have you provided
The Banquet I bespoke for her Reception
At my Tent?

Att. So, please your Grace, we have.

Gon. But thou, my Poysner, must prepare the Bowl
That Crowns this Banquet, when our Mirth is high,
The Trumpets sounding and the Flutes replying,
Then is the Time to give this fatal Draught
To this imperious Sister; if then our Arms succeed,
Edmund more dear than Victory is mine.
But if Defeat or Death it self attend me,
'Twill charm my Ghost to think I've left behind me [*Trumpet.*
No happy Rival: heark, she comes. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Bastard *in his Tent.*

Bast. To both these Sisters have I sworn my Love,
Each jealous of the other, as the Stung
Are of the Adder; neither can be held
If both remain Alive; where shall I fix?
Cornwall is Dead, and *Regan*'s empty Bed
Seems cast by Fortune for me, but already
I have enjoy'd her, and bright *Gonerill*
With equal Charms brings dear variety,
And yet untasted Beauty: I will use
Her Husband's Countenance for the Battail, then
Usurp at once his Bed and Throne. [*Enter Officers.*
My trusty Scouts y' are well return'd, have ye descry'd

The

The Strength and Poſture of the Enemy?
Off. We have, and were ſurpriz'd to find
The baniſht *Kent* return'd, and at their Head;
Your Brother *Edgar* on the Rear; Old *Gloſter*
(a moving Spectacle) led through their Ranks,
Whoſe pow'rfull Tongue, and more prevailing Wrongs,
Have ſo enrag'd their ruſtick Spirits, that with
Th' approaching Dawn we muſt expect their Battle.
Baſt. You bring a welcome Hearing; Each to his Charge.
Line well your Ranks and ſtand on your Award,
To Night repoſe you, and i' th' Morn we 'll give
The Sun a Sight that ſhall be worth his Riſing. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *A Valley near the Camp.*

Enter Edgar *and* Gloſter.

Edg. Here, Sir, take you the ſhadow of this Tree
For your good Hoſt, pray that the Right may thrive:
If ever I return to you again
I'll bring you Comfort. [*Exit.*
Gloſt. Thanks, friendly Sir;
The Fortune your good Cauſe deſerves betide you.

An Alarum, after which Gloſter *ſpeaks.*

The Fight grows hot; the whole War's now at Work,
And the goar'd Battle bleeds in every Vein,
Whilſt Drums and Trumpets drown loud Slaughter's Roar:
Where's *Gloſter* now that us'd to head the Fray,
And ſcour the Ranks where deadlieſt Danger lay?
Here like a Shepherd in a lonely Shade,
Idle, unarm'd, and liſtning to the Fight.
Yet the diſabled Courſer, Maim'd and Blind,
When to his Stall he hears the ratling War,
Foaming with Rage tears up the batter'd Ground,
And tugs for Liberty.
No more of Shelter, thou blind Worm, but forth
To th' open Field; the War may come this way
And cruſh thee into Reſt. — Here lay thee down

And tear the Earth, that work befits a Mole.
O dark Deſpair! when, *Edgar*, wilt thou come
To pardon and diſmiſs me to the Grave! [*A Retreat ſounded.*
Heark! a Retreat, the King has Loſt or Won.

Re-enter Edgar, *bloody.*

Edg. Away, old Man, give me your Hand, away!
King *Lear* has loſt, He and his Daughter tane,
And this, ye Gods, is all that I can ſave
Of this moſt precious Wreck: give me your Hand.
Gloſt. No farther, Sir, a Man may Rot even here.
Edg. What? in ill Thoughts again? Men muſt endure
Their going hence ev'n as their coming hither.
Gloſt. And that's true too. [*Exeunt.*

Flouriſh. Enter in Conqueſt, Albany, Gonerill, Regan, Baſtard.—
Lear, Kent, Cordelia *Priſoners.*

Alb. It is enough to have Conquer'd, Cruelty
Shou'd ne're ſurvive the Fight, Captain o'th' Guards
Treat well your royal Priſoners till you have
Our further Orders, as you hold our Pleaſure.
Gon. Heark, Sir, not as you hold our Husbands pleaſure
[*To the Captain aſide.*
But as you hold your Life, diſpatch your Pris'ners.
Our Empire can have no ſure Settlement
But in their Death, the Earth that covers them
Binds faſt our Throne. Let me hear they are Dead.
Capt. I ſhall obey your Orders.
Baſt. Sir, I approve it ſafeſt to pronounce
Sentence of Death upon this wretched King,
Whoſe Age has Charms in it, his Title more,
To draw the Commons once more to his Side,
'Twere beſt prevent ——
Alb. Sir, by your Favour,
I hold you but a Subject of this War,
Not as a Brother.
Reg. That's as we liſt to Grace him.
Have you forgot that He did lead our Pow'rs?

Bore

Bore the Commiſſion of our Place and Perſon?
And that Authority may well ſtand up
And call it ſelf your Brother.
Gon. Not ſo hot,
In his own Merits he exalts himſelf
More than in your Addition.

Enter Edgar, *diſguiſed.*

Alb. What art Thou?
Edg. Pardon me, Sir, that I preſume to ſtop
A Prince and Conquerour, yet e'er you Triumph,
Give Ear to what a Stranger can deliver
Of what concerns you more than Triumph can.
I do impeach your General there of Treaſon,
Lord *Edmund*, that uſurps the Name of *Gloſter*,
Of fowleſt Practice 'gainſt your Life and Honour;
This Charge is True, and wretched though I ſeem
I can produce a Champion that will prove
In ſingle Combat what I do avouch;
If *Edmund* dares but truſt his Cauſe and Sword.
Baſt. What will not *Edmund* dare, my Lord, I beg
The favour that you'd inſtantly appoint
The Place where I may meet this Challenger,
Whom I will ſacrifice to my wrong'd Fame,
Remember, Sir, that injur'd Honour's nice
And cannot brook delay.
Alb. Anon, before our Tent, i'th' Army's view,
There let the Herald cry.
Edg. I thank your Highneſs in my Champion's Name,
He'll wait your Trumpet's call.
Alb. Lead. [*Exeunt.*

Manent, Lear, Kent, Cordelia, *guarded.*

Lear. O *Kent*, *Cordelia!*
You are the onely Pair that I e'er wrong'd,
And the juſt Gods have made you Witneſſes
Of my Diſgrace, the very ſhame of Fortune,
To ſee me chain'd and ſhackled at theſe years!

Yet were you but Spectatours of my Woes,
Not fellow-ſufferers, all were well!

Cord. This language, Sir, adds yet to our Affliction.

Lear. Thou, *Kent*, didſt head the Troops that fought my Battel,
Expos'd thy Life and Fortunes for a Maſter
That had (as I remember) baniſht Thee.

Kent. Pardon me, Sir, that once I broke your Orders,
Baniſht by you, I kept me here diſguis'd
To watch your Fortunes, and protect your Perſon,
You know you entertain'd a rough blunt Fellow,
One *Cajus*, and you thought he did you Service.

Lear. My truſty *Cajus*, I have loſt him too! [*Weeps.*
'Twas a rough Honeſty.

Kent. I was that *Cajus*,
Diſguis'd in that courſe Dreſs to follow you.

Lear. My *Cajus* too! wer't thou my truſty *Cajus*,
Enough, enough——

Cord. Ah me, he faints! his Blood forſakes his Cheek,
Help, *Kent*——

Lear. No, no, they ſhall not ſee us weep,
We'll ſee them rot firſt,——Guards lead away to Priſon,
Come, *Kent*, *Cordelia* come,
We Two will ſit alone, like Birds i'th' Cage,
When Thou doſt ask me Bleſſing, I'll kneel down
And ask of Thee Forgiveneſs; Thus we'll live,
And Pray, and Sing, and tell old Tales, and Laugh
At gilded Butter-flies, hear Sycophants
Talk of Court News, and we'll talk with them too,
Who loſes, and who wins, who's in, who's out,
And take upon us the Myſtery of Things
As if we were Heav'ns Spies.

Cord. Upon ſuch Sacrifices
The Gods themſelves throw Incenſe.

Lear. Have I caught ye?
He that parts us muſt bring a Brand from Heav'n.
Together we'll out-toil the ſpight of Hell,
And Die the Wonders of the World; Away.

[*Exeunt, guarded.*

Flouriſh:

Flouriſh: Enter before the Tents, Albany, Gonerill, Regan, *Guards and Attendants;* Gonerill *ſpeaking apart to the Captain of the Guards entring.*

Gon. Here's Gold for Thee, Thou knowſt our late Command
Upon your Pris'ners Lives, about it ſtreight, and at
Our Ev'ning Banquet let it raiſe our Mirth
To hear that They are Dead.
Capt. I ſhall not fail your Orders. [*Ex.*

Albany, Gon. Reg. *take their Seats.*

Alb. Now, *Gloſter*, truſt to thy ſingle Vertue, for thy Souldiers,
All levied in my Name, have in my Name
Took their Diſcharge; now let our Trumpets ſpeak,
And Herald read out This. [*Herald Reads.*

If any Man of Quality, within the Liſts of the Army, will maintain upon Edmund, *ſuppos'd Earl of* Gloſter, *that he is a manifold Traytour, let him appear by the third ſound of the Trumpet; He is bold in his Defence.* ——*Agen, Agen.*

[*Trumpet Anſwers from within.*

Enter Edgar, *Arm'd.*

Alb. Lord *Edgar!*
Baſt. Ha! my Brother!
This is the onely Combatant that I cou'd fear;
For in my Breaſt Guilt Duels on his ſide,
But, Conſcience, what have I to do with Thee?
Awe Thou thy dull Legitimate Slaves, but I
Was born a Libertine, and ſo I keep me.
Edg. My noble Prince, a word——e'er we engage
Into your Highneſs's Hands I give this Paper,
It will the truth of my Impeachment prove
Whatever be my fortune in the Fight.
Alb. We ſhall peruſe it.
Edg. Now, *Edmund*, draw thy Sword,

That if my Speech has wrong'd a noble Heart,
Thy Arm may doe thee Juſtice: here i'th' preſence
Of this high Prince, theſe Queens, and this crown'd Liſt,
I brand thee with the ſpotted name of Traytour,
Falſe to thy Gods, thy Father and thy Brother,
And what is more, thy Friend; falſe to this Prince:
If then Thou ſhar'ſt a ſpark of *Gloſter*'s Vertue,
Acquit thy ſelf, or if Thou ſhar'ſt his Courage,
Meet this Defiance bravely.

Baſt. And dares *Edgar*,
The beaten routed *Edgar*, brave his Conquerour?
From all thy Troops and Thee, I forc't the Field,
Thou haſt loſt the gen'ral Stake, and art Thou now
Come with thy petty ſingle Stock to play
This after-Game?

Edg. Half-blooded Man,
Thy Father's Sin firſt, then his Puniſhment,
The dark and vicious Place where he begot thee
Coſt him his Eyes: from thy licentious Mother
Thou draw'ſt thy Villany; but for thy part
Of *Gloſter*'s Blood, I hold thee worth my Sword.

Baſt. Thou bear'ſt thee on thy Mother's Piety,
Which I deſpiſe; thy Mother being chaſte
Thou art aſſur'd Thou art but *Gloſter*'s Son,
But mine, diſdaining Conſtancy, leaves me
To hope that I am ſprung from nobler Blood,
And poſſibly a King might be my Sire:
But be my Birth's uncertain Chance as 'twill,
Who 'twas that had the hit to Father me
I know not; 'tis enough that I am I:
Of this one thing I'm certain —— that I have
A daring Soul, and ſo have at thy Heart
Sound Trumpet. [*Fight*, Baſtard *falls.*

Gon. and *Reg.* Save him, ſave him.

Gon. This was Practice, *Gloſter*,
Thou won'ſt the Field, and waſt not bound to Fight
A vanquiſht Enemy, Thou art not Conquer'd
But couz'ned and betray'd.

Alb. Shut your Mouth, Lady,
Or with this Paper I ſhall ſtop it——hold, Sir,

Thou

Thou worſe than any Name, reade thy own evil,
No Tearing, Lady, I perceive you know it.
Gon. Say if I do, who ſhall arraign me for't?
The Laws are Mine, not Thine.
Alb. Moſt monſtrous! ha, Thou know'ſt it too.
Baſt. Ask me not what I know,
I have not Breath to Anſwer idle Queſtions.
Alb. I have reſolv'd—your Right, brave Sir, has conquer'd,

[*To* Edgar.

Along with me, I muſt conſult your Father.

[*Ex.* Albany *and* Edgar.

Reg. Help every Hand to ſave a noble Life;
My half o'th' Kingdom for a Man of Skill
To ſtop this precious ſtream.
Baſt. Away ye Empericks,
Torment me not with your vain Offices:
The Sword has pierc't too far; *Legitimacy*
At laſt has got it.
Reg. The Pride of Nature Dies.
Gon. Away, the minutes are too precious,
Diſturb us not with thy impertinent Sorrow.
Reg. Art Thou my Rival then profeſt?
Gon. Why, was our Love a Secret? cou'd there be
Beauty like Mine, and Gallantry like His
And not a mutual Love? juſt Nature then
Had err'd: behold that Copy of Perfection,
That Youth whoſe Story will have no foul Page
But where it ſays he ſtoopt to *Regan*'s Arms:
Which yet was but Compliance, not Affection;
A Charity to begging, ruin'd Beauty!
Reg. Who begg'd when *Gonerill* writ That? expoſe it

[*Throws her a Letter.*

And let it be your Army's mirth, as 'twas
This charming Youth's and mine, when in the Bow'r
He breath'd the warmeſt ecſtaſies of Love,
Then panting on my Breaſt, cry'd matchleſs *Regan*

That

That *Gonerill* and Thou ſhou'd e'er be Kin!
Gon. Die, *Circe*, for thy Charms are at an End,
Expire before my Face, and let me ſee
How well that boaſted Beauty will become
Congealing Blood and Death's convulſive Pangs.
Die and be huſht, for at my Tent laſt Night
Thou drank'ſt thy Bane, amidſt thy rev'ling Bowls:
Ha! doſt thou Smile? is then thy Death thy Sport
Or has the truſty Potion made thee Mad?
Reg. Thou com'ſt as ſhort of me in thy Revenge
As in my *Gloſter*'s Love, my Jealouſie
Inſpir'd me to prevent thy feeble Malice
And Poiſon Thee at thy own Banquet.
Gon. Ha!
Baſt. No more, my Queens, of this untimely Strife,
You both deſerv'd my Love and both poſſeſt it.
Come, Souldiers, bear me in; and let
Your royal Preſence grace my laſt minutes:
Now, *Edgar*, thy proud Conqueſt I forgive;
Who wou'd not chooſe, like me, to yield his Breath
T'have Rival Queens contend for him in Death?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *A Priſon.*

Lear *aſleep, with his Head on* Cordelia's *Lap.*

Cord. What Toils, thou wretched King, haſt Thou endur'd
To make thee draw, in Chains, a Sleep ſo ſound?
Thy better Angel charm thy raviſht Mind
With fancy'd Freedom; Peace is us'd to lodge
On Cottage Straw, Thou haſt the Begger's Bed,
Therefore ſhou'dſt have the Begger's careleſs Thought.
And now, my *Edgar*, I remember Thee,
What Fate has ſeiz'd Thee in this general Wreck
I know not, but I know thou muſt be wretched
Becauſe *Cordelia* holds Thee Dear.
O Gods! a ſuddain Gloom o'er-whelms me, and the Image
Of Death o'er-ſpreads the Place.—ha! who are Theſe?

Enter

Enter Captain *and* Officers *with Cords.*

Capt. Now, Sirs, diſpatch, already you are paid
In part, the beſt of your Reward's to come.
Lear. Charge, charge upon their Flank, their laſt Wing haults;
Puſh, puſh the Battel, and the Day's our own.
Their Ranks are broke, down, down with *Albany.*
Who holds my Hands? — O thou deceiving Sleep,
I was this very Minute on the Chace;
And now a Priſoner here— What mean the Slaves?
You will not Murder me?
Cord. Help Earth and Heaven!
For your Souls ſake's, dear Sirs, and for the Gods.
Offic. No Tears, good Lady, no pleading againſt Gold and Preferment;
Come, Sirs, make ready your Cords.
Cord. You, Sir, I'll ſeize,
You have a humane Form, and if no Pray'rs
Can touch your Soul to ſpare a poor King's Life,
If there be any Thing that you hold dear,
By That I beg you to diſpatch me Firſt.
Capt. Comply with her Requeſt, diſpatch her Firſt.
Lear. Off Hell-hounds, by the Gods I charge you ſpare her;
'Tis my *Cordelia*, my true pious Daughter:
No Pity? — Nay then take an old Man's Vengeance.

Snatches a Partizan, and ſtrikes down two of them; the reſt quit Cordelia, *and turn upon him. Enter* Edgar *and* Albany.

Edg. Death! Hell! Ye Vultures hold your impious Hands,
Or take a ſpeedier Death than you wou'd give.
Capt. By whoſe Command?
Edg. Behold the Duke your Lord.
Alb. Guards, ſeize thoſe Inſtruments of Cruelty.
Cord. My *Edgar*, Oh!
Edg. My dear *Cordelia*, Lucky was the Minute
Of our Approach, the Gods have weigh'd our Suffrings;

W'are

W' are paſt the Fire, and now muſt ſhine to Ages.
Gent. Look here, my Lord, ſee where the generous King
Has ſlain Two of 'em.
Lear. Did I not, Fellow?
I 've ſeen the Day, with my good biting Faulchion
I cou'd have made 'em skip; I am Old now,
And theſe vile Croſſes ſpoil me; Out of Breath!
Fie, Oh! quite out of Breath and ſpent.
Alb. Bring in old *Kent*, and, *Edgar*, guide you hither
Your Father, whom you ſaid was near,
[*Ex.* Edgar.
He may be an Ear-witneſs at the leaſt
Of our Proceedings.
[Kent *brought in here.*
Lear. Who are you?
My Eyes are none o' th' beſt, I 'll tell you ſtreight;
Oh *Albany!*, Well, Sir, we are your Captives,
And you are come to ſee Death paſs upon us.
Why this Delay? — or is 't your Highneſs pleaſure
To give us firſt the Torture? Say ye ſo?
Why here 's old *Kent* and I, as tough a Pair
As e'er bore Tyrant's Stroke: — but my *Cordelia*,
My poor *Cordelia* here, O pitty! ——
Alb. Take off their Chains — Thou injur'd Majeſty,
The Wheel of Fortune now has made her Circle,
And Bleſſings yet ſtand 'twixt thy Grave and Thee.
Lear. Com'ſt Thou, inhumane Lord, to ſooth us back
To a Fool's Paradiſe of Hope, to make
Our Doom more wretched? go too, we are too well
Acquainted with Misfortune to be gull'd
With Lying Hope; No, we will hope no more.
Alb. I have a Tale t' unfold ſo full of Wonder
As cannot meet an eaſy Faith;
But by that Royal injur'd Head 'tis True.
Kent. What wou'd your Highneſs?
Alb. Know the noble *Edgar*
Impeacht Lord *Edmund* ſince the Fight, of Treaſon,
And dar'd him for the Proof to ſingle Combat,
In which the Gods confirm'd his Charge by Conqueſt;
I left ev'n now the Traytor wounded Mortally.

Lear.

Lear. And whither tends this Story?
Alb. E'er they fought
Lord *Edgar* gave into my Hands this Paper,
A blacker Scrowl of Treaſon, and of Luſt
Than can be found in the Records of Hell;
There, Sacred Sir, behold the Character
Of *Gonerill* the worſt of Daughters, but
More Vicious Wife.
Cord. Cou'd there be yet Addition to their Guilt?
What will not They that wrong a Father doe?
Alb. Since then my Injuries, *Lear*, fall in with Thine:
I have reſolv'd the ſame Redreſs for Both.
Kent. What ſays my Lord?
Cord. Speak, for me thought I heard
The charming Voice of a deſcending God.
Alb. The Troops by *Edmund* rais'd, I have disbanded;
Thoſe that remain are under my Command.
What Comfort may be brought to cheer your Age
And heal your ſavage Wrongs, ſhall be apply'd;
For to your Majeſty we do Reſign
Your Kingdom, ſave what Part your Self conferr'd
On Us in Marriage.
Kent. Hear you that, my Liege?
Cord. Then there are Gods, and Vertue is their Care.
Lear. Is't Poſſible?
Let the Spheres ſtop their Courſe, the Sun make Hault,
The Winds be huſht, the Seas and Fountains Reſt;
All Nature pauſe, and liſten to the Change.
Where is my *Kent*, my *Cajus*?
Kent. Here, my Liege.
Lear. Why I have News that will recall thy Youth;
Ha! Didſt Thou hear't, or did th' inſpiring Gods
Whiſper to me Alone? Old *Lear* ſhall be
A King again.
Kent. The Prince, that like a God has Pow'r, has ſaid it.
Lear. *Cordelia* then ſhall be a Queen, mark that:
Cordelia ſhall be Queen; Winds catch the Sound
And bear it on your roſie Wings to Heav'n.
Cordelia is a Queen.

Re-enter Edgar *with* Gloſter.

Alb. Look, Sir, where pious *Edgar* comes
Leading his Eye-leſs Father: O my Liege!
His wondrous Story will deſerve your Leiſure:
What He has done and ſuffer'd for your Sake,
What for the Fair *Cordelia's*.
Gloſt. Where is my Liege? Conduct me to his Knees to hail
His ſecond Birth of Empire; my dear *Edgar*
Has, with himſelf, reveal'd the King's bleſt Reſtauration.
Lear. My poor dark *Gloſter*;
Gloſt. O let me kiſs that once more ſceptred Hand!
Lear. Hold, Thou miſtak'ſt the Majeſty, kneel here;
Cordelia has our Pow'r, *Cordelia's* Queen.
Speak, is not that the noble Suffring *Edgar*?
Gloſt. My pious Son, more dear than my loſt Eyes.
Lear. I wrong'd Him too, but here's the fair Amends.
Edg. Your leave, my Liege, for an unwelcome Meſſage.
Edmund (but that's a Trifle) is expir'd;
What more will touch you, your imperious Daughters
Gonerill and haughty *Regan*, both are Dead,
Each by the other poiſon'd at a Banquet;
This, Dying, they confeſt.
Cord. O fatal Period of ill-govern'd Life!
Lear. Ingratefull as they were, my Heart feels yet
A Pang of Nature for their wretched Fall; ——
But, *Edgar*, I defer thy Joys too long:
Thou ſerv'dſt diſtreſt *Cordelia*; take her Crown'd:
Th' imperial Grace freſh Blooming on her Brow;
Nay, *Gloſter*, Thou haſt here a Father's Right;
Thy helping Hand t' heap Bleſſings on their Head.
Kent. Old *Kent* throws in his hearty Wiſhes too.
Edg. The Gods and You too largely recompence
What I have done; the Gift ſtrikes Merit Dumb.
Cord. Nor do I bluſh to own my Self o'er-paid
For all my Suffrings paſt.
Gloſt. Now, gentle Gods, give *Gloſter* his Diſcharge.
Lear. No, *Gloſter*, Thou haſt Buſineſs yet for Life;

Thou,

Thou, *Kent* and I, retir'd to ſome cool Cell
Will gently paſs our ſhort reſerves of Time
In calm Reflections on our Fortunes paſt,
Cheer'd with relation of the proſperous Reign
Of this celeſtial Pair; Thus our Remains
Shall in an even Courſe of Thought be paſt,
Enjoy the preſent Hour, nor fear the Laſt.

Edg. Our drooping Country now erects her Head,
Peace ſpreads her balmy Wings, and Plenty Blooms.
Divine *Cordelia*, all the Gods can witneſs
How much thy Love to Empire I prefer!
Thy bright Example ſhall convince the World
(Whatever Storms of Fortune are decreed)
That Truth and Vertue ſhall at laſt ſucceed.

[*Ex. Omnes.*

FINIS.

EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. *BARRY*.

INconſtancy, the reigning Sin o' th' Age,
Will ſcarce endure true Lovers on the Stage;
You hardly ev'n in Plays with ſuch diſpenſe,
And Poëts kill 'em in their own Defence.
Yet One bold Proof I was reſolv'd to give,
That I cou'd three Hours Conſtancy Out-live.
You fear, perhaps, whilſt on the Stage w' are made
Such Saints, we ſhall indeed take up the Trade;
Sometimes we Threaten —— but our Vertue may
For Truth I fear with your Pit-Valour weigh:
For (not to flatter either) I much doubt
When We are off the Stage, and You are out,
We are not quite ſo Coy, nor You ſo Stout.
We talk of Nunn'ries —— but to be ſincere
Whoever lives to ſee us Cloyſter'd There,
May hope to meet our Critiques at Tangier.
For ſhame give over this inglorious Trade
Of worrying Poëts, and go maule th' Alcade.
Well —— ſince y' are All for bluſtring in the Pit,
This Play's Reviver humbly do's admit
Your abs'lute Pow'r to damn his Part of it;
But ſtill ſo many Maſter-Touches ſhine
Of that vaſt Hand that firſt laid this Deſign,
That in great Shakeſpear's *Right, He's bold to ſay*
If you like nothing you have ſeen to Day
The Play your Judgment damns, not you the Play.